The Imitation of Christ

by Thomas à Kempis

Translated by Rev. William Benham (1905)

Updated, Illustrated, and Annotated (with references and songs)
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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The treatise “Of the Imitation of Christ” appears to have been originally written in Latin early in the fifteenth century. Its exact date and its authorship are still a matter of debate. Manuscripts of the Latin version survive in considerable numbers all over Western Europe, and they, with the vast list of translations and of printed editions, testify to its almost unparalleled popularity. One scribe attributes it to St. Bernard of Clairvaux; but the fact that it contains a quotation from St. Francis of Assisi, who was born thirty years after the death of St. Bernard, disposes of this theory. In England there exist many manuscripts of the first three books, called “Musica Ecclesiastica,” frequently ascribed to the English mystic Walter Hilton. But Hilton seems to have died in 1395, and there is no evidence of the existence of the work before 1400. Many manuscripts scattered throughout Europe ascribe the book to Jean le Charlier de Gerson, the great Chancellor of the University of Paris, who was a leading figure in the Church in the earlier part of the fifteenth century. The most probable author, however, especially when the internal evidence is considered, is Thomas Haemmerlein, known also as Thomas à Kempis, from his native town of Kempen, near the Rhine, about forty miles north of Cologne. Haemmerlein, who was born in 1379 or 1380, was a member of the order of the Brothers of Common Life, and spent the last seventy years of his life at Mount St. Agnes, a monastery of Augustinian canons in the diocese of Utrecht. Here he died on July 26, 1471, after an uneventful life spent in copying manuscripts, reading, and composing, and in the peaceful routine of monastic piety.

With the exception of the Bible, no Christian writing has had so wide a vogue or so sustained a popularity as this. And yet, in one sense, it is hardly an original work at all. Its structure it owes largely to the writings of the medieval mystics, and its ideas and phrases are a mosaic from the Bible and the Fathers of the early Church. But these elements are interwoven with such delicate skill and a religious feeling at once so ardent and so sound, that it promises to remain, what it has been for five hundred years, the supreme call and guide to spiritual aspiration.

Rev. William Burnham, 1905

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I first encountered The Imitation of Christ when I was 14 years old and living in Taiwan. My missionary "uncle," who had served in China before the Communist takeover, gave me a copy and suggested I read it. I did. I was not conscious of its impact on me then, but after rereading it roughly fifty years later, I suspect it had a large effect since it still resonates so deeply.

Do note that since the author was writing in the 1400s in the Catholic Church, his view on the priesthood and on what it means to be a saint was radically different than mine. He had very little understanding of the priesthood of the believer or that all followers of Christ are saints. His view of the sacraments was likewise quite different than mine, due to the same effects of time period and environment. Having said that, I still appreciate much of what he said about the Lord's Supper.

I suspect that many young readers today may not choose to read it due to the archaic language of Burnham's translation. I retained the layout of the original translation. I hope updating the language and providing some illustrations will make it more appealing to today's disciples. Adding Bible references relevant to each chapter is intended to encourage further independent study and thought. The music is a bonus to assist readers in thinking about the message of each chapter in new ways. You can access the music files with the built-in music player at:
https://archive.org/details/lyrics-and-credits.
The QR code to the right will take you to that site.

Note that the illustrations are in the style of 15th-century woodcut art. This is the style which would have been used if the book had been illustrated. The subject matter and frames are consistent with that art form and era. I utilized two forms of it, one earlier in the book and one later.

May the Lord complete the good work He has begun in you to conform you to the image of Christ.

Dr. Curtis Sergeant, 2025

THE IMITATION OF CHRIST

THE FIRST BOOK: ADMONITIONS PROFITABLE FOR THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

Chapter 1: On Following Christ and Rejecting the Vanity of the World

1. **"The one who follows Me will not walk in the darkness,"** (1) says the Lord. These are the words of Christ, and they show us how deeply we must imitate His life and character if we want true spiritual light and freedom from the blindness of our hearts. So let it be our highest aim to focus our hearts and minds on the life of Jesus Christ.

2. His teaching surpasses all the teachings of godly people, and those who have His Spirit find in it the hidden manna. (2) Yet many people, though they often hear the Gospel, feel very little desire for it—because they do not have the mind of Christ. So then, whoever wants to truly understand Christ's words with wisdom, let that person work to align their whole life with the mind of Christ.

3. What good is it to have deep discussions about the Holy Trinity if you lack humility and are displeasing to the very Trinity you speak of? For it's not deep words that make a person holy and right before God—it's a life lived well that makes someone precious in God's eyes. I would rather feel deep sorrow for sin than be skilled in explaining what contrition means. Even if you knew the entire Bible and the sayings of all the philosophers, what good would it do you without the love and grace of God? "Vanity of vanities," everything is empty and worthless—except loving God and serving only Him. That is the highest wisdom: to turn our backs on this world and reach toward the kingdom of heaven.

4. So it's foolishness to seek and trust in wealth that will disappear. It's also foolish to crave praise and raise yourself up in pride. It's foolish to follow your selfish desires and let them control you—for that path leads to ruin. It's foolish to want a long life, yet not care whether it's a good life. It's foolish to care only about this life and not think about what comes next. It's foolish to love what quickly passes away and not run toward the place where eternal joy lasts forever.

5. Keep in mind often the Scripture: **"The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor is the ear filled with hearing."** (3) So make every effort to turn your heart away from loving the things you can see, and instead fix it on the things that are unseen. For those who live to please their flesh corrupt their conscience and destroy God's grace in their lives.

(1) John 8:12
(2) Revelation 2:17
(3) Ecclesiastes 1:8

Additional Bible References

- **Philippians 2:5** – "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus"
- **1 John 2:17** – "The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God continues to live forever."
- **Colossians 3:2** – "Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth."
- **Matthew 6:19–20** – "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth... but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven…"
- **Romans 8:5** – "For those who are in accord with the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are in accord with the Spirit, on the things of the Spirit."

Only One Light

[Verse 1]
I tried the paths that shimmered bright
With wealth and pride and fleeting light
But every step just left me bare
Until I found my Savior there

[Chorus]
Only one light leads me home
Only one voice I will own
All this world will fade away
But Jesus' truth will stay

[Verse 2]
I chased the honors, longed to rise
But found no peace beneath the skies
The mind of Christ—so low, so wise
Brought tears of joy to my eyes

[Chorus]
Only one light leads me home
Only one voice I will own
All this world will fade away
But Jesus' truth will stay

[Bridge]
Turn my eyes from things I see
To what is real and yet to be
Help me leave this dust behind
For treasure that the heart can't find

[Chorus]
Only one light leads me home
Only one voice I will own
All this world will fade away
But Jesus' truth will stay

Chapter 2: On Thinking Humbly of Yourself

1. Every person has a natural desire for knowledge—but what good is knowledge without the fear of God? A humble farmworker who serves God is certainly better off than a proud scholar who studies the stars but ignores his own soul. The one who truly knows himself sees how small he is and cares nothing for the praise of others. If I understood everything in the world but lacked love, what good would it do me before God, who will judge each of us by what we've done?

2. Give your heart rest from chasing excessive knowledge, for it often leads to distraction and deception. People with learning often want to appear wise and be called scholars. Yet there are many things to learn that offer little or no value for the soul. Truly foolish is the one who pursues lesser things instead of what strengthens the soul. Many words do not satisfy the heart—but a good life brings peace to the mind, and a clean conscience gives great confidence before God.

3. The more knowledge and understanding you gain, the more seriously you will be judged—unless your life is holy. So don't become proud because of the insights you've received; instead, fear the weight of responsibility that comes with knowledge. If you think you know much and understand it well, remember—there is far more that you do not know. Don't become arrogant; admit your ignorance freely. Why do you want to put yourself above others, when there are many who know far more than you, even in the Scriptures? If you want to learn something that truly helps, love to be unnoticed and be content to be thought of as unimportant.

4. The greatest and most helpful lesson is when a person truly knows and humbles himself. To think nothing of yourself, and to think well and kindly of others—that is deep and mature wisdom. Even if you see your neighbor sinning openly and seriously, don't think yourself better. You don't know how long you will remain upright. We are all fragile and weak; consider no one more fragile than yourself.

Additional Bible References

- **Proverbs 1:7** – "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction."
- **1 Corinthians 13:2** – "And if I have all knowledge... but do not have love, I am nothing."
- **James 3:13** – "Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom."
- **Romans 12:3** – "Do not think more highly of yourself than you ought to think, but think so as to have sound judgment..."

- **1 Corinthians 8:2** – "If anyone thinks that he knows anything, he has not yet known as he ought to know."
- **Galatians 6:1** – "Even if a person is caught in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual are to restore such a person... looking to yourself so that you are not tempted as well."

Let Me Be Small

[Verse 1]
Let me be small in my own eyes
Not chasing praise, not seeking highs
For all my learning, all I gain
Can't cleanse my soul of prideful stain

[Chorus]
Let me be humble, let me be low
Lifting You higher wherever I go
Not by wisdom, not by might
But by grace I walk in light

[Verse 2]
The more I know, the more I see
The depths of grace that cover me
Let others rise, let others shine
I'll count it joy to fall behind

[Chorus]
Let me be humble, let me be low
Lifting You higher wherever I go
Not by wisdom, not by might
But by grace I walk in light

[Bridge]
If I should stumble, if I should fall
Remind me, Lord, I've lost it all
Unless my heart is bowed in fear
Of You alone, so near, so near

[Chorus]
Let me be humble, let me be low
Lifting You higher wherever I go
Not by wisdom, not by might
But by grace I walk in light

Chapter 3: On Knowing the Truth

1. Happy is the one whom Truth itself teaches—not through symbols and passing words, but directly as it truly is. (1) Our own opinions and emotions often mislead us, and we barely grasp the truth. What good is it to debate obscure and mysterious matters, which won't even be brought up at the final judgment—because we were never meant to know them? How foolish it is to ignore what's useful and necessary, while filling our minds with things that are speculative and spiritually harmful! We have eyes, but we don't see.

2. And why should we waste time arguing about abstract concepts like categories and classifications? The one who hears the voice of the Eternal Word is set free from endless debates. All things come from this One Word, and all things point back to Him—He is the Beginning who also speaks to us. (2) No one understands rightly or judges wisely without Him. The person who sees all things as united in Christ, who brings all things back to Him, and who views everything through that lens—that person is steady in spirit and finds rest in God. O God, You are the Truth—make me one with You in everlasting love. I grow weary of reading and hearing so many things; in You is everything I truly want. Let all scholars be silent; let all creation be still before You. You alone—speak to me.

3. The more unified and uncomplicated a person is inwardly, the more easily they understand even deep truths—and they do so with little effort, because their insight is lit from above. A spirit that is pure, sincere, and steady isn't thrown off course by many tasks, because it does all things to honor God and tries to avoid all selfish motives. Who causes more trouble for you than your own undisciplined heart? A good and godly person prepares in their heart what must be done outwardly and therefore is not distracted by the cravings of a corrupt will. Who faces a more difficult struggle than the one striving for self-mastery? Yet this is what we must aim for: to conquer ourselves, and grow daily in strength and wholeness, pressing on toward perfection.

4. Every perfection in this life is mixed with imperfection, and even our clearest spiritual vision is not without some darkness. A humble knowledge of yourself is a safer path to God than deep intellectual exploration. This doesn't mean we should avoid learning or ignore what is good—but a clean conscience and a holy life are better than all the knowledge in the world. And because many chase after knowledge instead of holy living, they wander far off course and bear little or no fruit.

5. Oh, if only people would put the same energy into rooting out sin and cultivating virtue as they do into chasing useless speculations—then there wouldn't be so much evil and scandal among everyday believers, nor such disgraceful behavior among those in religious life. Surely, at the Day of Judgment, the question won't be "What did you read?" but "What did you do?" Not "How eloquently did you speak?" but "How faithfully did you live?" Tell me—where are all the scholars and teachers you once knew and admired? Others now sit in their places, and those who replaced them may never even think of them. While they lived, they seemed important—but now, no one mentions their names.

6. Oh, how quickly the glory of this world fades! If only their lives had matched their knowledge, then their studies would have had real value. But many are ruined by their learning—because they care little about serving God. They want greatness more than humility, so they "became futile in their thoughts." (3) The only person who is truly great is the one who has great love. The only person who is truly great is the one who considers himself small and sees earthly honors as meaningless. The truly wise person counts all earthly things as garbage in order to gain Christ. And the truly learned person is the one who does God's will and abandons his own.

(1) Psalm 94:12; Numbers 12:8
(2) John 8:25
(3) Romans 1:21

Additional Bible References

- **1 Corinthians 8:1** – "Knowledge makes one conceited, but love edifies."
- **Ecclesiastes 12:12–13** – "The writing of many books is endless... but fear God and keep His commandments."
- **1 Corinthians 3:18** – "If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, he must become foolish, so that he may become wise."
- **Philippians 3:8** – "I count all things to be loss... so that I may gain Christ."
- **James 1:22** – "Prove yourselves doers of the word, and not just hearers who deceive themselves."
- **Matthew 7:24** – "Everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock."

Teach Me to See

[Verse 1]
Teach me to see what matters most
Not empty words or foolish boast
The voice that formed the earth and sea
Now speaks in love to even me

[Chorus]
You are the Truth, my Light, my Way
No other voice has life to say
Strip me of pride and let me be
A soul that listens, pure and free

[Verse 2]
Let scholars speak, let sages write
But still I seek Your truth and light
For wisdom flows from hands that yield
Not from the scroll, but from the field

[Chorus]
You are the Truth, my Light, my Way
No other voice has life to say
Strip me of pride and let me be
A soul that listens, pure and free

[Bridge]
So many words, so little done
But You delight in just this one—
A heart that walks in love and grace
And seeks alone to see Your face

[Chorus]
You are the Truth, my Light, my Way
No other voice has life to say
Strip me of pride and let me be
A soul that listens, pure and free

Chapter 4: On Wisdom in Action

1. We should not put our trust in every word spoken by others, nor in every feeling within ourselves. Instead, we must test things carefully and patiently, to see whether they are truly from God. Sadly, we are so weak that it's easier for us to believe and repeat bad things about others than good things. But those who are mature in faith do not quickly listen to every rumor or report, because they understand how weak and unstable human nature is—especially in what it says.

2. It is a sign of great wisdom not to act in haste, or to be stubborn in holding to our own opinions. Part of that wisdom is also found in refusing to believe every word we hear, and in choosing not to repeat everything we hear—even when we think it's true. Instead, seek the counsel of a wise person with a clear conscience. Choose to be guided by someone better than yourself rather than relying on your own ideas. A life of integrity teaches a person wisdom before God and gives them insight into many things. The more humble and obedient a person is before God, the wiser they will become in all areas of life—and the more peace they will have in their soul.

Additional Bible References

- **1 John 4:1** – "Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God..."
- **Proverbs 14:15** – "The naive believes everything, but the sensible person considers his steps."
- **James 1:19** – "Everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger."
- **Proverbs 11:14** – "Where there is no guidance, the people fall, but in an abundance of counselors there is victory."
- **Philippians 2:3** – "Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but with humility consider one another as more important than yourselves."

Teach Me to Wait

[Verse 1]
Not every voice is from above
Not every word is truth or love
But still I long to walk Your way
With wisdom in the light of day

[Chorus]
Teach me to wait, to test, to pray
To seek Your counsel every day
Not rushing in, but standing still
Till I am sure it's Your good will

[Verse 2]
Too quick to speak, too slow to hear
I've stumbled where I should draw near
But humble hearts will always find
The peace You give, the wiser mind

[Chorus]
Teach me to wait, to test, to pray
To seek Your counsel every day
Not rushing in, but standing still
Till I am sure it's Your good will

[Bridge]
Let me not trust my restless mind
But lean on wisdom more refined
A faithful friend, a steady guide
Will walk with me and stand beside

[Chorus]
Teach me to wait, to test, to pray
To seek Your counsel every day
Not rushing in, but standing still
Till I am sure it's Your good will

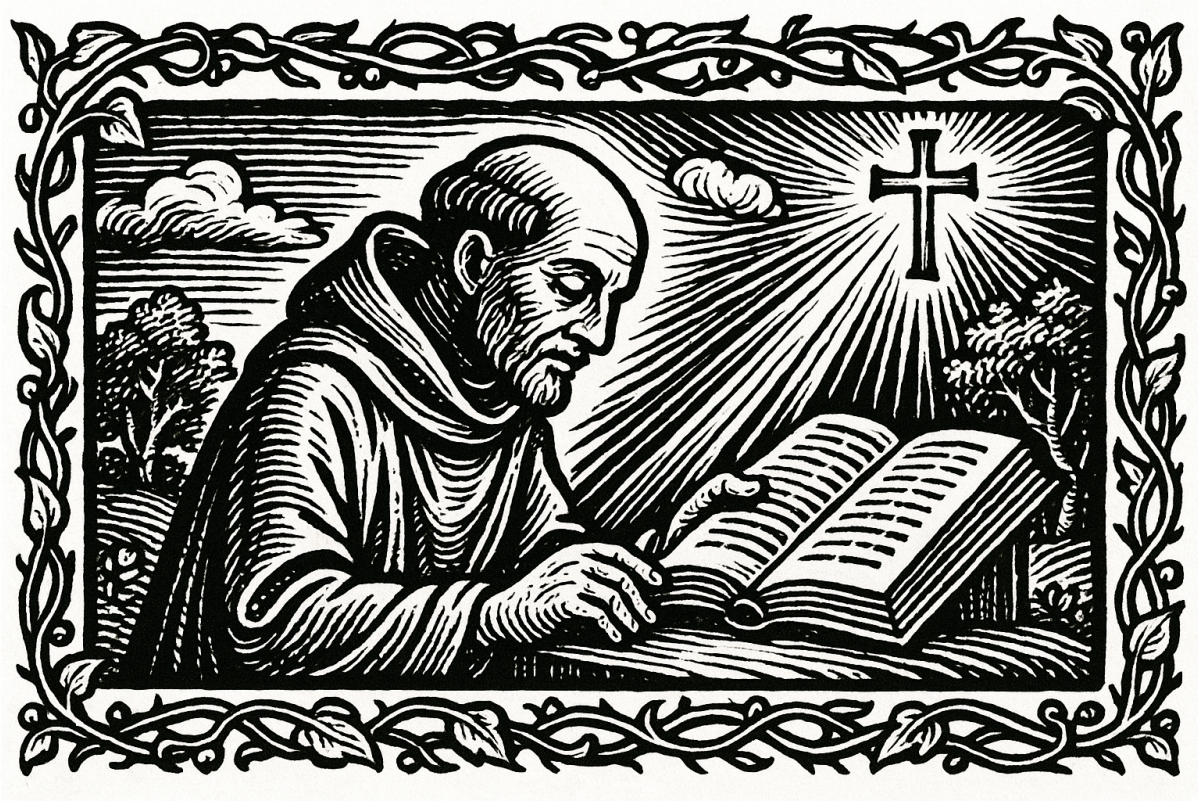
Chapter 5: On Reading the Holy Scriptures

1. What we must seek in the Holy Scriptures is Truth—not cleverness with words. All Scripture should be read in the same Spirit in which it was written. We ought to search for what is spiritually useful, not for what provides material for clever debate. That's why we should read both devotional and simple books, as well as those that are deep and complex. And don't let the reputation of the writer discourage or sway you—whether they are well-educated or not. Instead, let your desire for pure truth draw you in. Don't ask, "Who said this?"—ask instead, "Is it true?"

2. People come and go, but the truth of the Lord lasts forever. God speaks to us in many ways, without showing favoritism. But often, it is our own curiosity that gets in the way when we read Scripture—we want to analyze and debate when we should simply read and listen. If you want to benefit from your reading, do it humbly, simply, and with sincerity—not to gain a reputation for being scholarly. Be eager to ask questions, and be quiet and attentive when listening to the words of godly people. And don't be offended by the hard sayings of those older and wiser than you; such words are rarely spoken without purpose.

Additional Bible References

- **2 Timothy 3:16** – "All Scripture is inspired by God and beneficial for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness."
- **Psalm 119:105** – "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."
- **Isaiah 40:8** – "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever."
- **James 1:21** – "Receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls."
- **1 Thessalonians 2:13** – "You accepted it not as the word of mere men, but as what it really is, the word of God."



Let the Word Speak

[Verse 1]
Not for the praise of minds that shine
Not for debates or clever lines
But for the truth that pierces deep
I come, O Lord, Your word to keep

[Chorus]
Let the Word speak, not man's acclaim
Let holy fire burn through my shame
With humble eyes and heart made still
I yield to truth and bend my will

[Verse 2]
Don't let the scholar steal my sight
Or make me doubt the Spirit's light
The voice of God in pages bare
Still speaks to those who seek Him there

[Chorus]
Let the Word speak, not man's acclaim
Let holy fire burn through my shame
With humble eyes and heart made still
I yield to truth and bend my will

[Bridge]
Not who said it—but what is true
Let me behold what's right and new
Forget the name, forget the fame
Just let me tremble at Your name

[Chorus]
Let the Word speak, not man's acclaim
Let holy fire burn through my shame
With humble eyes and heart made still
I yield to truth and bend my will

Chapter 6: On Disordered Desires

1. Whenever a person desires something too much, restlessness quickly follows. The proud and the greedy are never at peace, but the poor in spirit and the humble dwell in abundant calm. Anyone who hasn't fully died to self is easily tempted and often falls even in small, trivial matters. It's difficult for the one who is weak in spirit—still partly ruled by the flesh and drawn to physical pleasures—to detach himself from earthly desires completely. And so, when he tries to pull away from them, he often becomes sad or irritated, especially if someone contradicts his will.

2. But if he gives in to his cravings instead, his conscience soon burdens him with guilt—because he followed his own desire, yet still didn't find the peace he was looking for. True peace of heart is found in resisting passion, not giving in to it. That's why the person who lives by the flesh or clings to external things will never know peace. Only the one who burns with love for God and lives by the Spirit will find lasting rest.

Additional Bible References

- **James 4:1–2** – "What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is it not the pleasures that wage war in your body's parts?"
- **Galatians 5:16** – "Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh."
- **Romans 8:6** – "The mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace."
- **Psalm 37:11** – "But the humble will inherit the land and will delight themselves in abundant prosperity."
- **1 Peter 2:11** – "Abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul."

Peace in the Fire

[Verse 1]
I chased the wind, I sought the flame
But every joy was laced with shame
I bowed to self, I fed my pride
And found no peace I thought would bide

[Chorus]
Peace in the fire, not in the flame
Not in desire or earthly name
But in surrender, quiet and true
The Spirit comes and makes me new

[Verse 2]
The war within, the pull so strong
To want what's empty all along
But when I fight and turn from sin
Your perfect peace comes flooding in

[Chorus]
Peace in the fire, not in the flame
Not in desire or earthly name
But in surrender, quiet and true
The Spirit comes and makes me new

[Bridge]
The flesh may rage, the world may call
But I will rise though I may fall
For every battle fought and won
Is peace that comes from You alone

[Chorus]
Peace in the fire, not in the flame
Not in desire or earthly name
But in surrender, quiet and true
The Spirit comes and makes me new

Chapter 7: On Fleeing from Vain Hope and Pride

1. The life of the person who puts their trust in people or in anything created is empty and vain. Don't be ashamed to serve others out of love for Jesus Christ, or to be considered poor in this life. Don't rely on yourself—put your hope in God. Do what you can, and God will bless your good intentions. Don't trust in your education or in anyone's cleverness, but instead trust in God's favor—He resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

2. Don't boast in your wealth if you have it, or in your friends if they are powerful. Boast only in God, who gives everything—and who wants to give even Himself. Don't be proud of your strength or outward beauty, because even a small illness can take it all away. Don't take pride in your skill or talent either, because it may offend the One who gave it to you. Every good gift comes from God.

3. Don't think yourself better than others—because you may actually look worse in the eyes of God, who sees the truth about every person. Don't be proud of your good works, for God's judgment is very different from man's. What people admire may actually displease Him. If there's anything good in you, believe that others have more—and this mindset will help you stay humble. There is no harm in placing yourself below everyone else; but there is great danger in thinking yourself above even one person. Peace always lives in the heart of the humble, but the proud are full of jealousy and constant turmoil.

Additional Bible References

- **Jeremiah 17:5** – "Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength..."
- **James 4:6** – "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."
- **1 Corinthians 4:7** – "What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?"
- **Proverbs 16:18** – "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling."
- **Romans 12:3** – "Do not think more highly of yourself than you ought to think..."
- **Philippians 2:3** – "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility consider others more important than yourselves."

Let Me Be Low

[Verse 1]
Let me not trust in silver or gold
Or praise from men or stories told
Let me be poor in the eyes of the world
But rich in You, my heart unfurled

[Chorus]
Let me be low, and You be high
Let me be small beneath Your sky
For pride will fade and strength will die
But grace will lift the humble nigh

[Verse 2]
I will not boast in what I've done
For all I have is from the Son
And if I shine, it's just Your light
That found me stumbling in the night

[Chorus]
Let me be low, and You be high
Let me be small beneath Your sky
For pride will fade and strength will die
But grace will lift the humble nigh

[Bridge]
If others rise and I remain
Then let me praise You all the same
For peace is mine when I am least
And You alone become my feast

[Chorus]
Let me be low, and You be high
Let me be small beneath Your sky
For pride will fade and strength will die
But grace will lift the humble nigh

Chapter 8: On the Danger of Excessive Familiarity

1. Do not open your heart to just anyone, but seek the counsel of someone who is wise and reverent before God. Avoid spending too much time with the young or with strangers. Don't flatter the rich, and don't be eager to associate with the powerful. Let your companions be those who are humble and sincere, devout and kind—and let your conversations center on things that build others up. Avoid forming close attachments with women, but entrust all godly women to God in prayer. Let God and His angels be your closest companions, and do not seek attention from people.

2. We are called to love all people, but not to be close friends with everyone. Sometimes someone is highly praised by others, and we expect to find joy in their company—but when we meet them, we are disappointed. At times, we try to win others by becoming too familiar, but instead, we lose their respect when they begin to see the flaws in our character.

Additional Bible References

- **Proverbs 13:20** – "One who walks with wise people will be wise, but a companion of fools will suffer harm."
- **1 Corinthians 15:33** – "Do not be deceived: Bad company corrupts good morals."
- **Proverbs 25:17** – "Let your foot rarely be in your neighbor's house, or he will become weary of you and hate you."
- **Psalm 119:63** – "I am a companion of all those who fear You, and of those who keep Your precepts."
- **Matthew 6:6** – "But when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret..."

Known by Heaven

[Verse 1]
I don't need crowds to know my name
Or circles rich with worldly fame
I seek the ones who fear the Lord
Whose hearts are tuned to Heaven's chord

[Chorus]
Let me be known by Heaven's gaze
Not by men or earthly praise
Let me be quiet, small, unseen
But full of grace, upright, and clean

[Verse 2]
Too near, too soon, we break and fall
Too much of self reveals it all
But in the secret, You are near
Your voice alone I long to hear

[Chorus]
Let me be known by Heaven's gaze
Not by men or earthly praise
Let me be quiet, small, unseen
But full of grace, upright, and clean

[Bridge]
Angels guard me, God be near
Keep me far from pride and fear
Let my fellowship be few
But faithful, humble, strong, and true

[Chorus]
Let me be known by Heaven's gaze
Not by men or earthly praise
Let me be quiet, small, unseen
But full of grace, upright, and clean

Chapter 9: On Obedience and Submission

1. It is truly a great thing to live in obedience—to be under authority and not in control of ourselves. It is far safer to live under submission than to hold a position of power. Many people obey only out of obligation rather than love; such people are easily offended and complain over small matters. They will never find true spiritual freedom unless they submit wholeheartedly, for God's sake. You may run here and there, but you won't find peace except through humble obedience to those whom God has placed over you. Many have been misled by fantasies about new places and the hope of change.

2. It's natural for each person to prefer their own way, and we're all more drawn to those who agree with us. But if Christ is truly among us, then sometimes we must give up our own opinions for the sake of peace. Who is so wise that they understand all things perfectly? Don't rely too much on your own understanding; be willing to hear the insights of others. Even if your opinion is good, you'll gain even more if, for the love of God, you lay it aside to follow another's.

3. I've often heard it said—and rightly—that it's safer to listen and receive counsel than to give it. While both perspectives may have value, refusing to listen when wisdom or the moment calls for it is a sign of pride or stubbornness.

Additional Bible References

- **Hebrews 13:17** – "Obey your leaders and submit to them—for they keep watch over your souls..."
- **Philippians 2:3–4** – "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility consider one another as more important than yourselves."
- **Proverbs 12:15** – "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man is one who listens to counsel."
- **James 4:6** – "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."
- **Ephesians 5:21** – "Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ."

The Safer Road

[Verse 1]
To yield is not to lose the fight
But find the way that leads to light
To bow beneath another's lead
Is often how the soul is freed

[Chorus]
The safer road is not my own
But where Your voice and will are known
Not pride, not power, not command
But humble trust in Your great hand

[Verse 2]
I used to chase my own desire
But found no peace, just fading fire
Till in obedience I was still
And learned the quiet strength of will

[Chorus]
The safer road is not my own
But where Your voice and will are known
Not pride, not power, not command
But humble trust in Your great hand

[Bridge]
If I must yield to gain Your grace
Then let me take the lower place
Your peace is found in bending low
Where self is lost and love can grow

[Chorus]
The safer road is not my own
But where Your voice and will are known
Not pride, not power, not command
But humble trust in Your great hand

Chapter 10: On the Danger of Using Too Many Words

1. Avoid the noise and commotion of crowds as much as you can, for even harmless conversations about worldly matters can become a snare—so easily are we drawn into vanity and defilement. I have often wished I had kept silent and stayed away from people. Why do we talk and gossip so often, when we so rarely return to silence without having wounded our conscience? We love conversation because we hope to find mutual encouragement or because we want to refresh our tired minds with a change of topic. We most often talk about the things we love or desire—or else the things we strongly dislike.

2. But sadly, much of this talk is empty and unhelpful. These outward comforts become real obstacles to the inward consolation that comes only from God. That's why we must be vigilant and prayerful—so our time is not wasted. If you must speak, let your words be useful and strengthening to others. Bad habits and neglect of our spiritual growth make us careless about guarding our speech. Still, conversations centered on spiritual things can be a great help to the soul—especially when shared among those who are like-minded and grounded in God.

Additional Bible References

- **Proverbs 10:19** – "When there are many words, wrongdoing is unavoidable, but one who restrains his lips is wise."
- **Ecclesiastes 5:2** – "Do not be quick with your mouth... for God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few."
- **Ephesians 4:29** – "Let no unwholesome word come out of your mouth, but if there is any good word for edification... speak it."
- **James 1:19** – "Everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger."
- **Colossians 4:6** – "Your speech must always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt..."

Let Silence Speak

[Verse 1]
I spoke too much, I listened less
And found my soul in weariness
The clamor stole the stillness deep
Where You alone my heart could keep

[Chorus]
Let silence speak, let noise be stilled
Let words be weighed and hearts be filled
With thoughts of You, not fleeting sound
Where true communion still is found

[Verse 2]
I chase the chatter, seek relief
But find no balm for soul or grief
Until I stop, until I hear
The whisper that draws heaven near

[Chorus]
Let silence speak, let noise be stilled
Let words be weighed and hearts be filled
With thoughts of You, not fleeting sound
Where true communion still is found

[Bridge]
When saints converse in truth and grace
Your Spirit joins that sacred space
But idle talk and worldly ways
Can steal the joy of quiet praise

[Chorus]
Let silence speak, let noise be stilled
Let words be weighed and hearts be filled
With thoughts of You, not fleeting sound
Where true communion still is found

Chapter 11: On Seeking Peace of Mind and Spiritual Growth

1. We can experience deep and lasting peace if we stop meddling in other people's words, actions, and affairs—especially in things that don't concern us. How can someone remain peaceful for long when they are constantly preoccupied with other people's business and neglect the care of their own soul? Blessed are those who are single-minded and focused—for they will enjoy true peace.

2. How did so many of the saints become so mature and spiritually focused? They worked diligently to die to worldly desires and to fix their hearts entirely on God. They freed themselves from distractions so they could be at rest in His presence. But we are often too entangled in our own affections and overly concerned with passing things. We rarely overcome even a single fault completely, and we are not zealous for daily spiritual growth. That's why we remain lukewarm and spiritually dull.

3. If we were more attentive to ourselves and less attached to outward things, we could grow wise and make real progress in knowing God. Our biggest obstacle is that we are still bound by desire, so we avoid the path of the saints. Even a small trial causes us to lose heart and turn quickly to the world for comfort instead of to Christ.

4. If we acted with courage and resolve to stand firm in spiritual battle, we would see the Lord helping us from heaven. He is always ready to help those who strive and trust in Him. In fact, He provides the very struggles we face so that we might grow stronger and gain the victory. If we see spiritual progress only in terms of religious activities and outward forms, our zeal will quickly fade. Instead, we must cut to the root of our life—cleansing ourselves of misplaced affections so we can possess our souls in peace.

5. If we made it our goal to root out just one fault every year, we would grow quickly toward maturity. But instead, we often feel we were more devoted in the early days of our faith than we are now, after many years of following Christ. Our zeal should grow daily—but now it seems a great achievement just to retain a fraction of our early passion. If we were only willing to stretch ourselves a little initially, we would later find that obedience becomes joyful and easy.

6. It's hard to break a habit, and even harder to deny our own will. But if you cannot overcome small and simple challenges, how will you stand against greater ones? Resist your desires early and unlearn bad habits—otherwise, they'll drag you into deeper bondage. Oh, if you only knew what peace your holy life could bring to yourself—and what joy it could bring to others—you would surely become more zealous for spiritual growth.

Additional Bible References

- **1 Thessalonians 4:11** – "Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business..."

- **Philippians 3:13–14** – "Forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal..."
- **Psalm 119:165** – "Those who love Your Law have great peace, and nothing causes them to stumble."
- **Galatians 5:24** – "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."
- **Luke 21:19** – "By your endurance, you will gain your lives."
- **Romans 12:2** – "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..."

Rooted in Peace

[Verse 1]
Let me not chase the winds of men
But turn my gaze to You again
Away from noise, from pride and show
Into the depths where waters flow

[Chorus]
Rooted in peace, grounded in grace
Stripped of the noise that crowds this place
One fault each year, one chain undone
Until I shine beneath the Son

[Verse 2]
The saints were strong because they died
To all the world and selfish pride
They burned with light, they walked in flame
They lived and breathed Your holy name

[Chorus]
Rooted in peace, grounded in grace
Stripped of the noise that crowds this place
One fault each year, one chain undone
Until I shine beneath the Son

[Bridge]
Let me not fear the smallest fight
For every step brings more of light
You give the struggle for my good
That I may stand where angels stood

[Chorus]
Rooted in peace, grounded in grace
Stripped of the noise that crowds this place
One fault each year, one chain undone
Until I shine beneath the Son

Chapter 12: On the Benefits of Adversity

1. It is good for us to experience sorrow and hardship from time to time, because these moments remind us that we are only strangers and travelers on this earth—and that we should not place our trust in anything worldly. It is also good to face opposition, or to be misjudged and treated unfairly, even when we have done what is right. These things help keep us humble and protect us from pride. In times like these, we are driven to seek God's approval more earnestly, especially when others falsely accuse us or refuse to recognize the good we do.

2. For this reason, we should place all our trust in God and not rely too much on human comfort. When someone who fears God is afflicted, tested, or tormented with evil thoughts, they learn more deeply how necessary God is—because apart from Him, they can do nothing truly good. In these moments, the heart is heavy; it groans and cries out from its distress. The person may even grow weary of life and long to be with Christ. Through all this, they are taught that perfect peace and lasting security cannot be found in this world.

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 119:71** – "It is good for me that I was afflicted, so that I may learn Your statutes."
- **Romans 5:3–4** – "We also celebrate in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character..."
- **Philippians 1:29** – "For to you it has been granted... not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake."
- **2 Corinthians 12:10** – "Therefore I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in distresses... for when I am weak, then I am strong."
- **Hebrews 11:13** – "They confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth."
- **Revelation 21:4** – "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes... and there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain..."

Stranger Still

[Verse 1]
When trials come and hearts grow weak
When comfort hides and no one speaks
I lift my eyes to skies unknown
And find I'm not yet fully home

[Chorus]
I'm a stranger still, just passing through
Learning trust in all I do
When sorrow speaks and joy is thin
I find my strength is found in Him

[Verse 2]
They judge me wrong, they turn away
But still I choose to walk Your way
For when they scorn and I am blamed
You whisper softly, call my name

[Chorus]
I'm a stranger still, just passing through
Learning trust in all I do
When sorrow speaks and joy is thin
I find my strength is found in Him

[Bridge]
If this is what it takes to see
That peace is found alone in Thee
Then let the tears and trials stay
Until I'm called to fly away

[Chorus]
I'm a stranger still, just passing through
Learning trust in all I do
When sorrow speaks and joy is thin
I find my strength is found in Him

Chapter 13: On Resisting Temptation

1. As long as we live in this world, we will experience trouble and temptation. As it says in the book of Job, *"The life of man on earth is a trial."* (1) Therefore, each of us must be alert to temptation and remain devoted to prayer, so that the devil doesn't find a foothold to deceive us. He never sleeps but roams about, looking for someone to devour. No one is so holy as to be entirely free from temptation, and none of us will be exempt from it while we live.

2. Even so, temptations can be extremely useful to us—even when they are difficult and painful—because they humble us, refine us, and teach us. Every saint has passed through great tribulation and temptation, and all grew stronger because of it. Those who gave up in the face of temptation fell away and were lost. There is no role so sacred, no place so secluded, that it is free from adversity and testing.

3. No one is completely free from temptation, because the root of it lies within us—we are born with sinful desires. One temptation or sorrow may pass, only to be followed by another. There will always be something to endure, for we have lost our original state of happiness. Many who try to escape temptation only fall more deeply into it. Victory is not found by running away, but by patient endurance and humble dependence on God.

4. The one who resists temptation only outwardly, but doesn't pull up the root of it, will gain little. In fact, temptation will come back more quickly and with greater power. Through patience and long-suffering, not force or willpower, we conquer—by God's help. When you are tempted, seek counsel, and don't judge others who are struggling. Instead, comfort them as you would want to be comforted.

5. The root of all temptation is a restless spirit and a lack of trust in God. Just as a ship without a rudder is tossed by waves, so a person without a clear purpose and trust is shaken by every temptation. Just as fire tests metal, temptation tests the soul. Often, we don't know our true strength until temptation exposes it. That's why we must be vigilant—especially at the *beginning* of temptation. The enemy is easiest to defeat when met at the door, before he has entered the mind. As one has said:

   "Check the beginnings; once thou might'st have cured,
   But now 'tis past thy skill, too long hath it endured."

   First comes the suggestion, then a vivid imagination, then a moment of pleasure, then desire, and finally consent. If we don't resist early, the enemy enters completely. And the longer we delay resistance, the weaker we become—and the stronger the enemy grows.

6. Some are tempted severely at the start of their spiritual journey, and others near the end. Some are tried throughout their entire life. Some experience only light temptations, according to God's perfect wisdom and justice. He knows each heart and circumstance and orders all things for the good of His chosen ones.

7. Therefore, we should never despair when we are tempted. Instead, we should cry out more earnestly to God, who will help us in every trial. As Paul writes, *"With the temptation He will also provide the way of escape, so that you will be able to endure it."* (2) So let us humble ourselves under God's mighty hand in every trial and temptation—for He will save and lift up those who are lowly in spirit.

8. Temptation reveals the progress of our spiritual life. The greater our endurance, the greater our reward, and the clearer our character becomes. It's no great thing to be devout when life is easy. But when we remain patient in hardship, *then* there is real hope for spiritual growth. Some are kept from serious temptations but fall in small and ordinary ones, to teach them humility—not to trust themselves in greater matters, when they are still weak in lesser ones.

(1) Job 7:1
(2) 1 Corinthians 10:13

Additional Bible References

- **James 1:2–4** – "Consider it all joy... when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance."
- **1 Peter 5:8–9** – "Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion... resist him, firm in your faith."
- **Matthew 26:41** – "Keep watching and praying, so that you do not come into temptation..."
- **Hebrews 4:15** – "We do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize... but One who has been tempted in all things as we are..."
- **Proverbs 24:10** – "If you show yourself lacking courage on the day of distress, your strength is meager."
- **Romans 5:3–5** – "Tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope..."

Strength Through the Trial

[Verse 1]
Temptation knocks with subtle sound
And waits to plant its root and ground
But I will stand though weakness calls
For You are near when courage falls

[Chorus]
Strength through the trial, peace through the pain
Grace in the fire, hope in the rain
Each test reveals the heart inside
And You, O Lord, are still my guide

[Verse 2]
I may not flee and win the fight
But in Your strength I walk in light
I see the saints who've walked before
They fell and rose, then stood once more

[Chorus]
Strength through the trial, peace through the pain
Grace in the fire, hope in the rain
Each test reveals the heart inside
And You, O Lord, are still my guide

[Bridge]
I won't despair when darkness nears
I'll lift my voice despite my fears
You make a way when none appears
And wipe away my hidden tears

[Chorus]
Strength through the trial, peace through the pain
Grace in the fire, hope in the rain
Each test reveals the heart inside
And You, O Lord, are still my guide

Chapter 14: On Avoiding Rash Judgment

1. Pay close attention to your own soul, and be careful not to judge the actions of others. Judging others is often a waste of effort; it frequently leads to error and sin. But when you examine and judge yourself, you are working toward something truly beneficial. Our judgments are often shaped by our own preferences and feelings, which makes them unreliable. But if God were always our deepest desire, we would be far less disturbed by the misleading conclusions of our own minds.

2. Yet often, a hidden motive within us—or even an outward circumstance—distorts our view. Many people unknowingly seek their own benefit in what they do. They appear to be at peace as long as things go their way, but the moment their desires are disappointed, they become disturbed and upset. Differences in opinion and emotional response often lead to conflict—even between close friends, neighbors, and godly people.

3. Long-standing habits are not easily given up, and no one easily adopts another's perspective. If you lean too heavily on your own understanding or personal experience rather than on the power of Jesus Christ, your insight will come slowly, if at all. For God desires that we submit ourselves entirely to Him, and that our reasoning be shaped and elevated by a deep, abundant love for Him.

Additional Bible References

- **Matthew 7:1–2** – "Do not judge, so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged..."
- **James 4:11–12** – "Do not speak against one another... who are you to judge your neighbor?"
- **Romans 14:4** – "Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls..."
- **Proverbs 3:5** – "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding."
- **1 Samuel 16:7** – "Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."
- **Galatians 6:4** – "Each one must examine his own work..."

Judge Not Too Quickly

[Verse 1]
I saw the fault, I made it known
But judged a heart I had not known
Too quick to speak, too slow to see
The beam that still was blinding me

[Chorus]
Judge not too quickly, love more still
Let grace be greater than your will
The soul that yields to mercy's voice
Will make humility its choice

[Verse 2]
The mind is swayed by hidden schemes
By self-made rules and secret dreams
But Christ alone can test what's true
And shape the thoughts that color you

[Chorus]
Judge not too quickly, love more still
Let grace be greater than your will
The soul that yields to mercy's voice
Will make humility its choice

[Bridge]
Let me see with heaven's eyes
Where truth and love together rise
And where my pride would build a wall
Let Jesus' mercy cover all

[Chorus]
Judge not too quickly, love more still
Let grace be greater than your will
The soul that yields to mercy's voice
Will make humility its choice

Chapter 15: On Works of Charity

1. Nothing wrong or sinful should ever be done—not for worldly gain, nor out of love for any person. But at times, for the sake of someone who is suffering, a good deed may be delayed or exchanged for a better one. In such cases, the good work is not lost but made better. Without love, no work has any real value. But whatever is done in love—even if it seems small or unimportant—bears good fruit. For God looks more at what a person is able to do than at how impressive their actions may appear.

2. The one who loves much accomplishes much. The one who acts with love acts well. The one who serves others before himself serves best. Sometimes what looks like love is actually selfishness—rooted in personal preference, self-will, the hope of being repaid, or the desire for approval.

3. True and perfect love seeks nothing for itself. It longs only for God to be glorified in everything. It feels no envy because it doesn't desire selfish joy. It doesn't boast or find satisfaction in personal success but seeks its joy in God alone, who is the highest Good. True charity gives credit only to God, who is the Source of all that is good, the Goal of all things, the Peace, and the Joy of all the saints. Oh, anyone who has even a spark of this kind of love has learned just how empty worldly things truly are.

Additional Bible References

- **1 Corinthians 13:3** – "If I give away all my possessions... but do not have love, it does me no good."
- **1 Peter 4:8** – "Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins."
- **Galatians 5:13** – "Through love serve one another."
- **Romans 12:9–10** – "Let love be without hypocrisy... give preference to one another in honor."
- **Matthew 25:40** – "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers or sisters of Mine, you did it for Me."
- **James 2:15–17** – "If a brother or sister is without clothing... and yet you do not give them what is necessary... what use is that?"

The Measure Is Love

[Verse 1]
Not in the size of the deed I do
But in the love that sees it through
Not for applause or earthly gain
But to bring light through someone's pain

[Chorus]
The measure is love, not name or pride
Not who was seen, but what's inside
The quiet hand, the unseen grace
That lifts the low in mercy's place

[Verse 2]
Let not my gift be steeped in me
In motives mixed or flattery
But let my heart with joy resign
That God alone is glorified

[Chorus]
The measure is love, not name or pride
Not who was seen, but what's inside
The quiet hand, the unseen grace
That lifts the low in mercy's place

[Bridge]
If I have love, I lack no worth
It breaks the chains that bind the earth
One spark of love, one holy flame
Can light the dark and bless His name

[Chorus]
The measure is love, not name or pride
Not who was seen, but what's inside
The quiet hand, the unseen grace
That lifts the low in mercy's place

Chapter 16: On Bearing with the Faults of Others

1. The things you cannot change—whether in yourself or in others—should be borne patiently, until God chooses to act. Remember that these trials may be for your own growth in patience, without which your spiritual rewards are of little worth. Still, when you encounter such difficulties, pray that God would give you strength and grace to bear them willingly and with a good heart.

2. If someone refuses to listen after being warned once or twice, don't argue with them. Instead, commit the matter to God, so that His will may be done and His glory shown in His servants. He knows how to turn even evil into good. Do your best to be patient with the faults and weaknesses of others, whatever they may be—because you, too, have many areas where others must be patient with you. If you cannot shape your own life exactly as you wish, how can you expect to shape someone else's according to your preferences? We are often eager to see others corrected, but slow to correct ourselves.

3. We want others to be strictly disciplined, but we resist discipline ourselves. We're bothered by the freedom others have, but upset when our own desires are denied. We want others to be held to firm rules, but we don't want to be restricted. All of this shows how rarely we measure others with the same standard we apply to ourselves. If everyone were perfect, how would we ever learn to suffer patiently for God's sake?

4. But God has ordained it this way so that we may learn to carry each other's burdens. None of us is without weakness, none without a burden, none self-sufficient, none wise enough on our own. We must bear with one another, comfort one another, support, instruct, and gently correct each other. The true strength of a person is best revealed during times of hardship—not because adversity creates weakness, but because it reveals what is already there.

Additional Bible References

- **Galatians 6:2** – "Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ."
- **Romans 15:1** – "Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves."
- **Colossians 3:13** – "Bear with one another, and forgive each other... just as the Lord forgave you."
- **Matthew 7:3** – "Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?"
- **Ephesians 4:2** – "With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love."
- **Proverbs 27:17** – "Iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."

Bear One Another

[Verse 1]
I see the flaws in others' lives
And speak too fast, too quick to rise
But when I stop and see my own
I find I'm weak and not alone

[Chorus]
Bear one another, love through the weight
Lift up the broken, steady the faint
None is perfect, none stands alone
We're all in need of grace to be shown

[Verse 2]
I want to mold the hearts I see
While mine still fights to be set free
Yet God, in wisdom, writes His plan
Through imperfect hearts and trembling hands

[Chorus]
Bear one another, love through the weight
Lift up the broken, steady the faint
None is perfect, none stands alone
We're all in need of grace to be shown

[Bridge]
When trials come and tempers flare
Let patience rise and mercy care
For in the heat the soul is tried
And true humility refined

[Chorus]
Bear one another, love through the weight
Lift up the broken, steady the faint
None is perfect, none stands alone
We're all in need of grace to be shown

Chapter 17: On Living a Religious Life

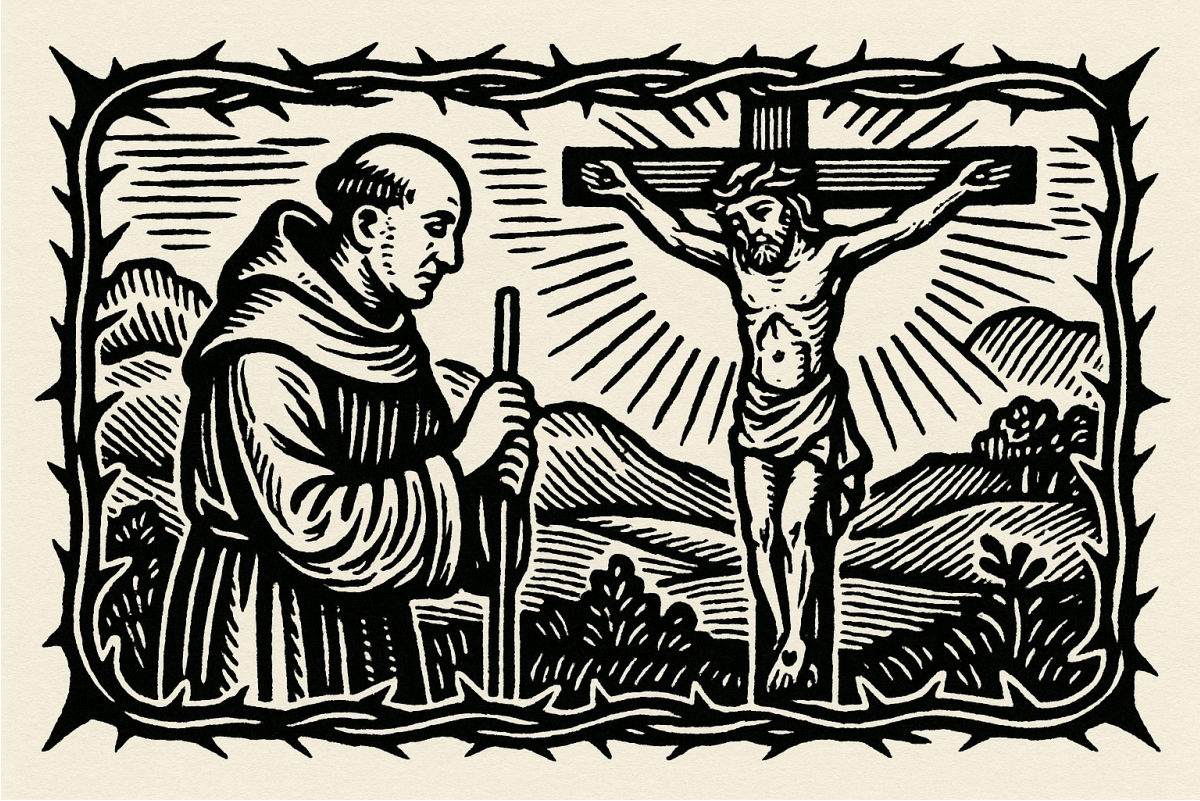
1. You must learn to deny yourself in many ways if you want to live in peace and harmony with others. It is no small thing to live in a religious community or spiritual fellowship—and to do so without grumbling, remaining faithful all the way to the end. Blessed is the one who lives well in such a setting and finishes faithfully. If you want to stand firm and grow as you should, see yourself as a foreigner and traveler on this earth. If you truly want to live a religious life, you must be willing to be thought a fool for Christ.

2. Outward things like clothing or appearance matter little; what truly makes someone spiritual is a changed character and a life of complete self-denial. Anyone who seeks anything besides God and the salvation of their soul will find only sorrow and frustration. And no one will enjoy lasting peace unless they truly aim to be the least and servant of all.

3. You are called to endure and to labor—not to a life of comfort or empty talk. In this place, people are tested like gold in the fire. No one can endure unless they humble themselves completely for the sake of God.

Additional Bible References

- **Luke 9:23** – "If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me."
- **Philippians 2:5–7** – "Have this attitude in yourselves... He emptied Himself... taking the form of a bond-servant..."
- **1 Peter 2:11** – "Beloved, I urge you as foreigners and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts..."
- **Matthew 23:11–12** – "The greatest of you shall be your servant. Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled..."
- **2 Timothy 2:3** – "Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus."
- **James 1:12** – "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial..."



The Pilgrim's Road

[Verse 1]
This path is not for comfort's sake
But for the soul that longs to break
From all that holds and pulls it low
To walk where Christ alone may go

[Chorus]
I am a pilgrim, a stranger here
Called to deny what draws me near
To live as least, to serve, to strive
To die to self, and thus to thrive

[Verse 2]
It's not the robe, it's not the name
But heart transformed by holy flame
The one who seeks for God alone
Will find in toil a deeper home

[Chorus]
I am a pilgrim, a stranger here
Called to deny what draws me near
To live as least, to serve, to strive
To die to self, and thus to thrive

[Bridge]
The furnace glows, the fire is near
But gold is shaped when it draws near
So let me bend, let pride be gone
Till Christ alone is all I own

[Chorus]
I am a pilgrim, a stranger here
Called to deny what draws me near
To live as least, to serve, to strive
To die to self, and thus to thrive

Chapter 18: On the Example of the Holy Fathers

1. Reflect on the vibrant and faithful lives of the holy fathers—those who truly embodied devotion and spiritual maturity—and you will see how little we have accomplished by comparison. How small, how insignificant, is our life compared to theirs! These saints and friends of Christ served the Lord through hunger and thirst, in cold and poverty, through hard work and exhaustion, through sleepless nights and fasting, in constant prayer and deep meditation, through persecution and scorn.

2. Oh, how many and how great were the sufferings endured by the Apostles, the Martyrs, the Confessors, the Virgins, and all who chose to follow in the footsteps of Christ! They gave up their lives in this world in order to keep them for eternal life. Consider the holy fathers who lived in the desert—their lives were strict and secluded. They faced long and severe temptations, constant attacks from the enemy, and yet offered frequent and fervent prayers to God. Their fasting was extreme; their zeal for spiritual growth burned strong. They fought courageously so that sin would not rule over them, and they reached for God with unwavering resolve. They labored by day and gave themselves to prayer at night—and even while they worked, they continued in silent communion with God.

3. They spent every moment profitably. Time with God was so sweet that hours felt short, and their desire for contemplation was so deep that they often forgot even the needs of their bodies. They gave up wealth, status, honors, friends, and family. They wanted nothing from the world. They ate only what was absolutely necessary, and they denied their bodies even when they had need. They were poor in earthly things, but rich beyond measure in grace and virtue. Though outwardly they were destitute, inwardly they overflowed with grace and heavenly blessing.

4. They were strangers to the world but intimate with God. In their own eyes, they were of no importance—and the world saw them the same way. But to God they were precious and beloved. They lived in deep humility, walked in simple obedience, and practiced love and patience. In this way, they became strong in spirit and gained great favor with God. They were given to all religious people as examples to follow—and their lives should stir us toward holiness far more than the lukewarm around us tempt us toward apathy.

5. Oh, how great was the love among those who first embraced the religious life! How fervent were their prayers! How eager they were to grow in holiness! What strict discipline they kept! How reverent and obedient they were under their leaders! The testimonies they left behind show that they were truly holy and upright people who courageously overcame the world. But now, a person is considered admirable merely for not falling into serious sin—or simply for staying committed to their calling.

6. Oh, the coldness and laziness of our generation! We so quickly drift away from the love and passion of those who came before us. Life itself seems burdensome because of our sloth and lack of devotion. But may the desire for holiness not fall asleep in you—especially since you have seen so many examples of truly devoted people.

Additional Bible References

- **Hebrews 12:1** – "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us... let us run with endurance the race set before us."
- **Philippians 3:17** – "Join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us."
- **2 Corinthians 11:27** – "I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst..."
- **1 Peter 2:21** – "Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you would follow in His steps."
- **Romans 12:11** – "Not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord..."
- **Revelation 3:15–16** – "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot... because you are lukewarm, I will spit you out of My mouth."

Let Me Burn Like Them

[Verse 1]
I've heard the stories, seen the flame
Of those who bore the cross and shame
They hungered not for wealth or praise
But walked with God through nights and days

[Chorus]
Let me burn like them, with holy fire
Strip me down to one desire
Not for ease, not for acclaim
But to bear the weight of Jesus' name

[Verse 2]
They labored hard, they prayed so deep
They found in loss what we now seek
Their riches lay in love alone
Their hearts a throne, where Christ was known

[Chorus]
Let me burn like them, with holy fire
Strip me down to one desire
Not for ease, not for acclaim
But to bear the weight of Jesus' name

[Bridge]
Let the world be dim, let my will be slain
Let the zeal of old run in my veins
If I forget the path they trod
Let me be stirred by the saints of God

[Chorus]
Let me burn like them, with holy fire
Strip me down to one desire
Not for ease, not for acclaim
But to bear the weight of Jesus' name

Chapter 19: On the Disciplines of a Devout Life

1. A Christian's life should be marked by all the virtues, so that they are inwardly what they appear to be outwardly. In fact, the inner life should be even more devoted than what is visible, for God sees the heart, and we must revere Him with all our being wherever we are. We should walk purely before Him, as the angels do. Every day, we ought to renew our vows and stir up zeal in our hearts, as though it were the very first day of our conversion. We should pray, "Help me, O God, to keep my good intentions and to serve You today. Grant that this day I may make a true beginning—for until now I have done nothing."

2. Our progress in the spiritual life depends on our determination, and diligence is necessary for anyone who wishes to grow. If those who make strong resolutions still often fall short, what can be expected of those who resolve only weakly or rarely? Many things can cause us to abandon our good intentions, but even a small neglect of our spiritual practices usually results in loss. The righteous depend more on God's grace than their own wisdom, for they put their trust in Him in all they do. As it is written, "Man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps." (1)

3. If spiritual practice is postponed for the sake of compassion or brotherly love, it can be resumed later without harm. But when it is abandoned out of laziness or apathy, that is sin, and its effects will be felt. No matter how hard we try, we will still fall short in many things. We should always have a clear goal before us, especially when it comes to resisting the sins that most often defeat us. Both our outward conduct and inward life must be carefully examined and disciplined—for both affect our spiritual growth.

4. If you cannot examine yourself constantly, then at least do so regularly—at a minimum, once in the morning and once in the evening. In the morning, make your resolutions. In the evening, examine how you lived—your words, your deeds, your thoughts—for in these you may have offended God or your neighbor. Gird yourself like a soldier of Christ against the attacks of the devil. Restrain your physical desires, and you will more easily control your other impulses. Always keep yourself busy—read, write, pray, meditate, or serve in some helpful way. Bodily discipline must be applied with wisdom and not equally for everyone.

5. Private spiritual exercises should usually be done in secret rather than in public. However, be careful not to neglect your regular duties while being overly zealous in private devotions. First, carry out the responsibilities entrusted to you with faithfulness and humility. Then, if you have time, you may give yourself to private devotion as you are led. Not every practice suits every person—what benefits one may not help another. Different seasons also call for different practices: some are better during feasts, others during fasts; some are best for trials, others for peace; some for sorrow, others for joy in the Lord.

6. As we approach the great feast days, we should renew our disciplines and seek the prayers of holy people more fervently. We ought to make resolutions from one feast

to the next, living as if each might be our last and preparing ourselves to enter the eternal celebration. At such times, we should live more devoutly and keep a close watch on our conduct, as though we were about to receive our reward from God.

7. And if that reward is delayed, let us consider ourselves still unprepared and unworthy, and work all the more to grow in holiness. As the Gospel of Luke says, “Blessed is that servant whom the master finds alert when He comes. Truly I say to you, He will put him in charge of all His possessions.” (2)

(1) Jeremiah 10:23
(2) Luke 12:43–44

Additional Bible References

- **2 Corinthians 4:16** – "Though our outer person is decaying, yet our inner person is being renewed day by day."
- **Romans 12:11** – "Do not lag in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."
- **Psalm 139:23–24** – "Search me, God... and lead me in the everlasting way."
- **1 Timothy 4:7–8** – "Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness... godliness is beneficial for all things."
- **Matthew 25:13** – "Be on the alert then, because you do not know the day nor the hour."
- **Hebrews 12:1** – "Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily entangles us, and run with endurance..."

This Day a New Beginning

[Verse 1]
Today, O Lord, I start again
Not in my strength, but Yours within
The past is gone, the day is new
Let all I say and think be true

[Chorus]
This day a new beginning be
A life of watchful constancy
With vows renewed, my heart afire
To seek Your will, to rise up higher

[Verse 2]
When I grow faint, restore my zeal
And shape my love by what is real
If I fall short, still let me rise
With eyes fixed upward to the skies

[Chorus]
This day a new beginning be
A life of watchful constancy
With vows renewed, my heart afire
To seek Your will, to rise up higher

[Bridge]
Each hour a gift, each task a call
To serve with joy, to give my all
From feast to fast, through dark and light
Let every moment burn with might

[Chorus]
This day a new beginning be
A life of watchful constancy
With vows renewed, my heart afire
To seek Your will, to rise up higher

Chapter 20: On the Love of Solitude and Silence

1. Find a regular and suitable time for meditation, and often reflect on the mercy God has shown to you. Avoid curious and speculative questions. Instead, focus on the thoughts that lead to repentance and sorrow for sin, not those that merely entertain. If you withdraw from idle conversations, aimless wandering, and fascination with the latest news and gossip, you will find enough time and mental space for meaningful reflection. The greatest saints did all they could to avoid unnecessary company and chose instead to be alone with God.

2. One once said, “Every time I go among people, I return less of a man.” This is something we too often experience after lengthy conversations. It is easier to remain completely silent than to avoid speaking too much. It is easier to stay home than to keep watch over yourself in public. Therefore, anyone who desires to go deeper into the hidden things of God must go apart with Jesus, away from the crowds. No one safely ventures outward unless he delights in staying home. No one speaks wisely unless he has learned the discipline of silence. No one can lead well unless they love to submit. No one can truly command unless he has first learned to obey.

3. No one can rejoice with a clean heart unless he has the witness of a good conscience. The boldness of the saints was always accompanied by deep reverence before God. Even when they were strong in virtue and grace, they remained humble and honest before Him. In contrast, the boldness of the wicked comes from arrogance and false confidence, which eventually leads to disgrace. Never presume that you are secure in this life, no matter how spiritual or devout you may seem to be.

4. Often, those who are held in the highest regard fall most shamefully, precisely because of overconfidence. This is why it is good for many people to experience inner trials and temptations. These prevent them from becoming proud or too reliant on worldly comfort. Oh, what peace a person would enjoy if they never chased after fleeting pleasures or became entangled with the things of the world! What deep rest would belong to the one who cast away all vanity and built their hope entirely upon God!

5. No one deserves the comfort of heaven who has not diligently practiced godly sorrow. If you want to experience true conviction of heart, enter your room and shut out the world's noise. As the psalm says, “Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still.” (1) You will often find in solitude what you lose in the world. Solitude becomes sweet if you remain faithful in it, but if you abandon it, it becomes a burden. If you embrace solitude and hold to it at the start of your spiritual life, it will become your dear friend and source of peace.

6. The devout soul grows and discovers hidden things in the Scriptures in silence and quietness. There she finds tears of repentance, cleansing her spirit and drawing closer to her Creator—more so than if she had stayed immersed in the world's distractions. God and His holy angels draw near to the one who separates from the crowds and even from friends. It is better to be unknown and take care of yourself than to be

admired and neglect your soul. It is praiseworthy for a spiritual person to go out seldom, avoid being noticed, and have no interest in worldly attention.

7. Why chase after what you cannot have? The world is passing away along with its desires. The craving for sensual pleasures draws you outward, but once the hour has passed, what do you bring back with you—except a guilty conscience and a distracted heart? A cheerful outing often leads to a sorrowful return. A joyful evening can result in a heavy morning. All worldly joy starts sweet but ends with bitterness. What can you see elsewhere that you cannot see at home? Look at the heavens, the earth, and the elements—from these come everything in the world.

8. What can you see that will last? Perhaps you think you will be satisfied, but you never truly are. Even if you could see everything all at once, it would still be an empty illusion. Instead, lift your eyes to God in heaven and pray that your sins and failings may be forgiven. Leave worthless things to those who chase after them, and focus instead on what God has commanded you. Shut your door and invite Jesus to come in and be with you. Stay with Him in the stillness of your soul, for nowhere else will you find such peace. If you had not gone out or listened to vain talk, you would have remained in better peace. But because you delight in hearing new things, your heart must now bear the burden of unrest.

(1) Psalm 4:4

Additional Bible References

- **Lamentations 3:26** – "It is good that he waits silently for the salvation of the Lord."
- **Isaiah 30:15** – "In quietness and trust is your strength."
- **Mark 1:35** – "And in the early morning... Jesus went out to a secluded place, and was praying there."
- **1 Thessalonians 4:11** – "Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business."
- **James 3:2** – "If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to reign in the whole body as well."
- **Proverbs 17:27–28** – "He who restrains his words has knowledge... Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise."

Remain with Jesus

[Verse 1]
Withdraw, my soul, from all that's loud
From fleeting praise and fickle crowd
The sweetest peace is not out there
But found alone in silent prayer

[Chorus]
Remain with Jesus, shut the door
Let world and worry speak no more
In quiet stillness find your place
And meet the Savior face to face

[Verse 2]
The room is small, the world is wide
But heaven comes when we abide
Not in the noise of rushing men
But in the voice that speaks within

[Chorus]
Remain with Jesus, shut the door
Let world and worry speak no more
In quiet stillness find your place
And meet the Savior face to face

[Bridge]
The loudest joy soon fades away
The quiet ones are those that stay
So trade the news and empty thrill
For tears that cleanse, and peace that's still

[Chorus]
Remain with Jesus, shut the door
Let world and worry speak no more
In quiet stillness find your place
And meet the Savior face to face

Chapter 21: On Compunction of Heart

1. If you want to make spiritual progress, keep yourself in reverent fear of God. Don't crave too much freedom or let your senses go undisciplined. Avoid careless laughter and lightheartedness. Instead, cultivate a sorrowful and tender heart before God—and you will find true devotion. A broken heart opens the door to many good things, while a careless life quickly loses them. It is remarkable that anyone can truly rejoice in this life while remembering our exile from heaven and the many dangers that threaten the soul.

2. When our hearts are light and we overlook our sins, we fail to feel the sorrow we should. Instead, we often laugh when we should mourn. There is no real freedom or lasting joy apart from the fear of God and a clean conscience. Blessed is the one who casts off every distraction and pursues the single aim of heartfelt repentance. Blessed is the one who removes anything that would stain or weigh down the conscience. Fight the good fight; bad habits are overcome by better ones. If you can learn to ignore people's opinions, they will often leave you alone to focus on your own work.

3. Don't meddle in the affairs of others or get entangled in the plans of the powerful. Always keep your attention on your own heart first, and advise yourself before you try to counsel your closest friends. If you don't have people's favor, don't be discouraged. Instead, be more concerned that you are not walking before God in holiness and discipline as you should. Often it is better and safer not to have many comforts in this life—especially physical comforts. If we rarely feel divine comfort, it is usually our own fault, because we don't pursue a broken spirit or give up worldly distractions.

4. Know that you are not worthy of divine comfort—but of hardship and affliction. When a person has true repentance, the world becomes bitter and heavy to them. A righteous person will always find reason to grieve, whether by looking at their own life or at the lives of others. We all live under burdens, but the more clearly someone sees themselves, the more deeply they grieve. Our sins and weaknesses give us more than enough reason to mourn. They wrap around us like chains, making it hard for us to lift our eyes to heaven.

5. If you thought more often about your death than about how long your life might last, you would certainly live with more urgency and intention. If you seriously considered the torments of hell, you would be more willing to suffer temporary hardship and submit to discipline without fear. But since these things don't reach our hearts—and we still cling to comfort—we remain cold, indifferent, and spiritually sluggish.

6. Many of our complaints come not from external burdens but from spiritual poverty. Therefore, pray humbly that the Lord would give you a heart of repentance, and say with the psalmist, "You have fed them with the bread of tears, and You have made them drink tears in large measure." (1)

(1) Psalm 80:5

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 51:17** – "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, God, You will not despise."
- **2 Corinthians 7:10** – "For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret."
- **James 4:8–9** – "Cleanse your hands, you sinners... be miserable, and mourn, and weep."
- **Ecclesiastes 7:3** – "Sorrow is better than laughter, for when a face is sad a heart may be happy."
- **Matthew 5:4** – "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."
- **Hebrews 12:11** – "All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterward it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness."

Bread of Tears

[Verse 1]
O heart so prone to wander far
So quick to laugh, forget the scar
Of sin that lingers, wounds not healed
The soul grows cold, the truth concealed

[Chorus]
Give me, O Lord, the bread of tears
To wash away my guilty years
Let sorrow be the path I tread
Until Your joy lifts up my head

[Verse 2]
Why chase delight in passing things?
Why dull the voice conviction brings?
I long to feel the weight of grace
And see my sin before Your face

[Chorus]
Give me, O Lord, the bread of tears
To wash away my guilty years
Let sorrow be the path I tread
Until Your joy lifts up my head

[Bridge]
Better to mourn with eyes on You
Than dance while hearts are far from true
Refine my heart with holy pain
So I may rise restored again

[Chorus]
Give me, O Lord, the bread of tears
To wash away my guilty years
Let sorrow be the path I tread
Until Your joy lifts up my head

Chapter 22: On the Contemplation of Human Misery

1. You are miserable wherever you are and wherever you turn—unless you turn to God. Why are you disturbed because things don't go according to your wishes and desires? Who has everything just the way they want it? Not I, not you, not any person on earth. No one is free from trouble or hardship, not even a king or a pope. Who, then, has the best life? The one who is willing to suffer something for the sake of God.

2. Many thoughtless and unstable people say, "Look how prosperous that man is—how rich, how powerful, how honored!" But lift your eyes to the good things of heaven, and you will see that all earthly things are worthless, uncertain, and full of anxiety. They are never enjoyed without care or fear. Human happiness does not lie in an abundance of earthly possessions—a modest amount is enough. Life on this earth is truly filled with hardship. And the more a person desires to live a spiritual life, the more painful this world becomes to them, because they better understand how corrupt it really is. For the devout soul, the daily routines of eating, sleeping, working, and dealing with bodily needs feel like a heavy burden and a constant reminder of sin's effects.

3. The inner life suffers greatly under the weight of the body's needs. That's why the psalmist earnestly prayed, "Relieve the troubles of my heart; bring me out of my distresses." (1) But woe to those who don't even realize how miserable they are! And even greater woe to those who love this broken and perishable life. Some cling to it so tightly (even when they can barely survive through toil or begging) that they would choose to live here forever rather than enter the Kingdom of God.

4. O foolish and faithless hearts, so immersed in the world that they have no taste for spiritual things! How bitter will be the end for those who loved worthless things! The saints and true followers of Christ counted as nothing the pleasures of the flesh or the splendor of this world. Their entire hope and affection were fixed on what is above. They longed for eternal, invisible things, lest love for what is seen pull them down.

5. Brother, don't lose your holy desire for spiritual growth. There is still time; the hour has not passed. Why delay your decision? Arise—begin now! Say to yourself, "Now is the time to act. Now is the time to fight. Now is the time to change." When you are weary or troubled, you are closer to God's blessing. You must pass through fire and water before God brings you into a place of peace and abundance. If you don't press forward with determination, you will never overcome your faults. As long as we carry this fragile body, we cannot be entirely free from sin or free from sorrow. We would gladly escape all misery, but since we lost our innocence through sin, we have also lost true joy. So we must be patient and wait for God's mercy, until this life is over and mortality is swallowed up by life.

6. How frail is human nature—always leaning toward evil! Today you confess your sin, and tomorrow you commit it again. Now you resolve to change, but within the hour, you behave as if you had never made a resolution. This is why we must remain humble and never think highly of ourselves, for we are weak and unstable. What we

gained through great labor and God's grace can quickly be lost through our negligence.

7. What will become of us in the end if we are already lazy and lukewarm at the beginning? Woe to us if we settle into comfort as if this were a time of peace—when there is no sign in our lives of real holiness! Instead, we should begin again, like fresh beginners in the school of Christ, learning how to live rightly and praying for future growth and a greater hunger for God.

(1) Psalm 25:17

Additional Bible References

- **Ecclesiastes 1:2** – "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity."
- **Romans 8:22–23** – "The whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth... even we ourselves groan within ourselves."
- **2 Corinthians 4:17–18** – "For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory... while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen."
- **Philippians 3:20** – "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for a Savior."
- **Luke 9:23** – "If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me."
- **Hebrews 12:1** – "Let us rid ourselves of every obstacle and the sin which so easily entangles us."

Now Is the Time

[Verse 1]
I've wandered in shadows, too long in delay
I've wasted the hours, just drifting away
But mercy is calling, it beckons my name
Today is the day, I will not stay the same

[Chorus]
Now is the time to fight
Now is the time to rise
To shake off the chains that bind my heart
And lift my weary eyes
Now is the time to run
To leave the past behind
The Savior waits with open arms
Now is the time

[Verse 2]
This world cannot offer the joy that I seek
Its riches are fading, its pleasures are weak
But God in His mercy still calls out to me
"Come taste what is lasting, come walk and be free"

[Chorus]
Now is the time to fight
Now is the time to rise
To shake off the chains that bind my heart
And lift my weary eyes
Now is the time to run
To leave the past behind
The Savior waits with open arms
Now is the time

[Bridge]
Through fire and through water, I'll follow Your lead
Though weary and wounded, I know what I need
Your grace is sufficient, Your promise is true
And now is the moment—I'm coming to You

[Final Chorus]
Now is the time to fight
Now is the time to rise
No more delay, no more disguise
I give You all my life
Now is the time to run
To leave the past behind
The Savior waits with open arms
Now is the time

Chapter 23: On Meditation Upon Death

1. Your life here will soon be over—so take seriously how things will be for you in the life to come. Today you are alive, and tomorrow you may be gone. Once out of sight, you are quickly out of mind. How dull and hardened the human heart is, focused only on the present and blind to what lies ahead. In every deed and thought, live as though this were your last day. If your conscience were clear, you would not fear death so much. It would be far better to guard against sin than to flee from death. If you're not ready today, what makes you think you'll be ready tomorrow? Tomorrow is never promised—and how do you know you'll even live to see it?

2. What good is a long life if you make so little use of it for spiritual growth? A longer life doesn't always bring more wisdom—it often increases guilt. Oh, that we might live even one day the way it ought to be lived! Many can count the years since their conversion, and yet show so little fruit. If dying is dreadful, perhaps it's even more dreadful to live long and never change. Blessed is the one who always keeps the hour of death before their eyes and prepares daily for it. If you've ever seen someone die, remember—you too will travel that same road.

3. When morning comes, think that you might not live to see nightfall; and when evening comes, don't assume you'll see another morning. Be always ready. Live every day so that death will never find you unprepared. Many people die suddenly and without warning. For at an hour when you do not expect it, the Son of Man will come. (1) In that final moment, you will see your whole life very differently. You will grieve bitterly that you lived so carelessly and wasted so much time.

4. Wise is the one who now tries to be in life what they wish they had been at death. A full rejection of the world, an intense desire to grow in virtue, love for spiritual discipline, sorrow over sin, a readiness to obey, denial of self, and the willingness to endure anything for Christ's sake—these are the qualities that bring peace at death. While you're healthy, you have many chances to do good. But when you're sick, who knows how much you'll be able to do? Few are improved by illness, just as those who are always on the move seldom become holy.

5. Don't place your hope in friends or family, and don't postpone your salvation. People will forget you faster than you think. It's wiser to prepare now, sending good works ahead of you, than to hope others will come through for you later. If you're not concerned for your soul now, why do you think anyone else will be concerned for it later? Right now is the most precious time you have. Now is the favorable time; now is the day of salvation. But how sad that we waste the time that could have been used to store up eternal treasure! The hour will come when you'll crave even one more day—yes, even one more hour—to repent. And I do not know if you will be granted it.

6. O beloved soul, what dangers you could escape—what fears you could avoid—if you lived with death always in mind! Strive now to live in such a way that in the hour of your death, you may rejoice rather than tremble. Learn now to die to the world, and you will begin to live with Christ. Learn now to reject all earthly things, and then you

may freely go to Christ. Discipline your body now with repentance, and then you may die with confidence.

7. How foolish it is to assume you'll live a long time when you don't even know if you'll live through today! How many have been deceived by that very hope and were taken from this life in an instant! Some have died by the sword, others by drowning, some by falling, some at a feast, others at play. One died by fire, another by violence, another by disease, another by crime. Death comes to all, and our lives pass swiftly like a shadow.

8. Who will remember you after you're gone? Who will pray for you? Do what you can now—while you still have time. For you do not know the day of your death or what will come after it. While you still have life, store up treasure in heaven. Think only about your salvation, and give your heart to the things of God. Make friends among the saints by honoring them and walking in their ways, so that when you depart, you may be welcomed into eternal dwellings. (2)

9. Keep your heart as a stranger and pilgrim on this earth—these worldly things do not belong to you. Keep your mind free and lifted up to God, for here we have no lasting city. (3) Direct your daily prayers to Him with tears and supplication, that when your spirit departs, it may be welcomed home by the Lord. Amen.

(1) Matthew 24:44
(2) Luke 16:9
(3) Hebrews 13:14

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 90:12** – "So teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom."
- **2 Corinthians 5:10** – "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ..."
- **Hebrews 9:27** – "It is appointed for people to die once, and after this comes judgment."
- **James 4:14** – "You do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor..."
- **Philippians 1:21** – "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."
- **1 Thessalonians 5:2** – "For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord is coming just like a thief in the night."

Now Is the Hour

[Verse 1]
Now is the hour to set your house in order
Now is the time to cast your idols down
No one can say what waits beyond tomorrow
But you can choose whose mercy will be found

[Chorus]
Live like you're dying—because you are
The grave's not distant, it's never far
Only one life, and it slips like sand
So rise up now, take your Savior's hand
Live for the light of eternity's power
This is your moment—now is the hour

[Verse 2]
Who will remember the praise of the people?
Who will recall all your wealth or your fame?
But God will remember the cries of repentance
And welcome His own by the Lamb that was slain

[Chorus]
Live like you're dying—because you are
The grave's not distant, it's never far
Only one life, and it slips like sand
So rise up now, take your Savior's hand
Live for the light of eternity's power
This is your moment—now is the hour

[Bridge]
Don't wait for peace, don't wait for signs
The Lord may come like a thief in the night
Let every breath confess His grace
And run with joy toward His embrace

[Final Chorus]
Live like you're dying—because you are
The grave's not distant, it's never far
Only one life, and it slips like sand
So rise up now, take your Savior's hand
Live for the light of eternity's power
This is your moment—now is the hour

Chapter 24: On the Judgment and Punishment of the Wicked

1. In all that you do, remember the end—and how you will stand before a righteous Judge, from whom nothing is hidden, who accepts no bribes, and makes no exceptions, but judges in perfect justice. O foolish and miserable sinner, who sometimes trembles at the face of an angry man—what will you say to God, who knows all your sins? Why don't you prepare yourself now for the Day of Judgment, when no one will be able to excuse you, and no one can carry your burden for you, but each person will answer for themselves? Today, your labor bears fruit, your tears are accepted, your groans are heard, your sorrow is pleasing to God, and your soul is being purified.

2. Even now, the one who patiently endures suffering finds great opportunity for purification. When he grieves more over another's sin than his own injury, when he prays sincerely for those who mistreat him, when he quickly seeks forgiveness and shows mercy instead of anger, when he constantly denies himself and brings his body into submission—then he is purifying his soul now, rather than waiting for the cleansing that will come with pain in the life to come. We deceive ourselves through our inordinate love of comfort and fleshly indulgence.

3. What will the fire of judgment consume except your sins? The more you pamper your body and follow your fleshly desires, the more severe your punishment will be—and the more fuel you're gathering for that fire. Whatever sin you cling to now, you will suffer for it more harshly. The lazy will be prodded with burning goads; gluttons will suffer unbearable hunger and thirst; the sexually immoral and pleasure-seekers will be plunged into burning pitch and foul-smelling sulfur; and the envious will wail like mad dogs in their misery.

4. Every sin will be repaid with its proper torment. The proud will be utterly humiliated; the greedy will be crushed in destitution. A single hour of suffering there will be more unbearable than a hundred years of the harshest repentance here. There will be no peace, no comfort for the condemned—though here we sometimes find relief in suffering and comfort from our friends. Be grieved now and sorrowful for your sins, so that you may stand with boldness on that day alongside the righteous. For the righteous will stand confidently before those who once oppressed them and treated their devotion with contempt. (1) He who humbly submitted to human judgment will then rise to render judgment. The poor and lowly will stand tall with courage, while the proud will be surrounded by terror.

5. Then it will become clear who was truly wise: the one who chose to be seen as a fool for Christ's sake. Then will we delight in every suffering we patiently endured, while the mouths of the wicked will be silenced. The godly will rejoice, and the wicked will mourn. The flesh that was afflicted will rejoice more than if it had been constantly indulged. Humble clothing will be honored, while expensive robes will be regarded with shame. The poor cottage will be praised above the grand palace. Patient endurance will be more powerful than worldly strength. Simple obedience will shine brighter than all worldly wisdom.

6. A pure conscience will bring more joy than deep knowledge. Giving up wealth for God's sake will matter more than owning the treasures of the world. You'll be glad you prayed devoutly, not that you ate sumptuously. You'll rejoice that you held your tongue, not that you spoke eloquently. Good deeds will far outweigh fine words. A disciplined life and genuine repentance will give more pleasure than all the pleasures of earth. Learn to suffer now in small things, so that you may escape greater suffering later. Test yourself here—see what you can endure now, for you will need to know how to endure more later. If you can't bear even minor discomfort now, how will you survive eternal torment? If a small trial now makes you impatient, what will hell do to you? Know this: you cannot have two paradises. You cannot indulge yourself here and reign with Christ hereafter.

7. Even if your entire life until now had been full of honor and pleasure—what would that profit you, if you were to die right now? All is vanity, except to love God and serve Him alone. The one who loves God with all his heart does not fear death, judgment, or hell—for perfect love gives confidence before God. But if you still delight in sin, it's no wonder you fear death and judgment. Still, if love for God has not yet restrained you, let the fear of hell at least hold you back from evil. For the one who loses the fear of God will not long remain in goodness, but will quickly fall into the traps of the devil.

(1) Wisdom 5:1

Additional Bible References

- **Ecclesiastes 12:14** – "For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil."
- **Hebrews 10:31** – "It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God."
- **2 Corinthians 5:10** – "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ..."
- **Romans 2:5-6** – "But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath for yourself..."
- **Revelation 20:12** – "And I saw the dead... and books were opened... and the dead were judged from the things which were written..."
- **Matthew 25:46** – "These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

The Fire Will Fall

[Verse 1]
There's a fire set for sinners
Not quenched by tears too late
A throne of perfect justice
No lie can penetrate
The Judge sees all in secret
No bribe can make Him bend
Each soul will stand uncovered
Alone, before the end

[Chorus]
The fire will fall, the truth will burn
The proud will shake, the saints will turn
From sorrow into song at last
Their trials and shame are in the past
But woe to those who served the flesh—
The fire will fall, and none will rest

[Verse 2]
Your pleasures pile like kindling
You spare yourself today
But every unchecked craving
Will bring you pain to pay
Why chase the world's approval,
When Christ was scorned and slain?
The robes of pride will smolder,
The humble ones will reign

[Chorus]
The fire will fall, the truth will burn
The proud will shake, the saints will turn
From sorrow into song at last
Their trials and shame are in the past
But woe to those who served the flesh—
The fire will fall, and none will rest

[Bridge]
Now is the time for weeping
Now is the hour to pray
For mercy still is waiting—
The fire is held at bay
O soul, prepare with trembling
Your Judge is at the door
Repent, and run to Jesus—
His blood will cleanse and restore

[Final Chorus]
The fire will fall, but grace is near
For those who turn, for those who fear
Let righteousness be now your call
So mercy meets you when flames fall
For love can cast out fear at last
If Christ redeems your guilty past

Chapter 25: Of the Zealous Amendment of Our Whole Life

1. Be watchful and diligent in serving God, and remind yourself often why you renounced the world. Was it not so that you might live for God and become a spiritual person? Therefore, pursue your spiritual growth with zeal—for soon you will receive the reward for your labor, and fear and sorrow will no longer trouble you. Now you labor a little, but you will enter into great rest, even everlasting joy. If you remain faithful and zealous in your work, have no doubt that God will be faithful and generous in His reward. You should certainly hope for victory, but do not slip into a false sense of security, lest you become lazy or prideful.

2. A certain man, tormented in his thoughts—tossed between hope and fear—was one day overwhelmed with grief. He fell before the altar of a church in prayer and meditated, saying, "Oh! If only I knew I would persevere!" Then a voice from God spoke within him: "And if you did know, what would you do? Do now what you would do then, and you shall be very secure." Encouraged and strengthened by this word, he surrendered himself to God's will. The turmoil of his soul ceased, and he no longer sought to uncover what would happen to him, but instead fixed his attention on knowing and doing God's good and perfect will—the beginning and end of every good work.

3. "Hope in the Lord and do good," says the Psalmist; "dwell in the land and you will be fed with its riches."(1) One thing that holds many people back from spiritual progress is fear of hardship or the struggle involved in change. But those who grow most in virtue are the ones who bravely confront what is hardest for them. Where self-denial is most difficult, there is the most profit, and greater grace is won.

4. Not everyone has the same struggles to overcome. Yet, the one who applies himself diligently will grow more—even if he faces stronger temptations—than someone who is naturally more even-tempered but less committed. Two things especially help in growing in holiness: first, to firmly resist the sin to which you are most prone by nature; and second, to eagerly pursue the virtue you most lack. Also, be diligent in overcoming the faults you dislike most in others.

5. Wherever you are, gather spiritual benefit. If you see or hear of a good example, be stirred to follow it. If you see something wrong, don't imitate it—and if you have done the same, correct yourself quickly. Just as you observe others, others are observing you. How beautiful it is to see disciplined and devout brothers and sisters, self-controlled and consistent. But how sad and discouraging it is to see them walking disorderly, not living according to their calling. It is harmful to abandon your purpose and chase after things that don't concern you.

6. Remember your responsibilities, and constantly call to mind the crucified Christ. You ought to be ashamed when you look at His life, realizing how little you have conformed yourself to Him, even though you've followed the spiritual path for a long time. A person who devoutly contemplates the holy life and suffering of Jesus will find in Him everything necessary for growth—and needs nothing more. Oh! If Jesus

Christ crucified, would come into our hearts, how quickly and thoroughly we would learn all we need!

7. The person who is earnest receives and endures all things well. But the careless and lazy person suffers trouble upon trouble because he lacks inward comfort and cannot reach for outward distraction. One who lives without discipline is heading for disaster. And anyone who seeks only easy, comfortable routines will always feel unsettled—something will always annoy or burden them.

8. Oh! If we had nothing else to do but praise God with all our hearts and voices! Oh! If we never had to eat or drink or sleep, but could simply devote ourselves to spiritual exercises—how much happier we would be than we are now, having to serve the flesh out of necessity! Oh! that our needs were gone, and only spiritual refreshment remained, which, sadly, we taste too little.

9. When a person no longer looks for comfort in any created thing, then he begins truly to enjoy God. Then he is content with whatever happens. He neither rejoices greatly in abundance nor grieves over lack, but entrusts himself completely to God, who is all in all—who never dies or perishes, but in whom everything lives and obeys without delay.

10. Always remember your end, and that lost time never returns. Without diligence, you will never grow in virtue. If you begin to grow cold, your life will decline; but if you stir up your zeal, you'll find peace, and your labor will feel lighter because of God's grace and the love of holiness. A zealous and diligent person is ready for anything. It is harder to resist sin and passion than to work hard with the body. One who neglects small sins will gradually fall into greater ones. But at the end of the day, if you have used your time well, you will rejoice. So, guard yourself, stir yourself, instruct yourself—and regardless of what others do, do not neglect yourself. The more you discipline yourself, the more you will grow. Amen.

(1) Psalm 37:3

Additional Bible References

- **1 Corinthians 9:27** – "But I strictly discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified."
- **Philippians 3:14** – "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."
- **Romans 12:11** – "Not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."
- **2 Timothy 4:7–8** – "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness..."

- **Hebrews 12:1** – "Let's rid ourselves of every obstacle and the sin which so easily entangles us, and run with endurance the race that is set before us."
- **John 15:5** – "Apart from Me you can do nothing."

Do Now What You Would Do Then

[Verse 1]
Why did you leave the world behind?
Why set your heart on things divine?
Don't forget the reason why—
You were made to live for Christ.
Let the flame of zeal arise,
Lift your gaze beyond the skies—
Soon your work will find reward
In the presence of the Lord

[Chorus]
Do now what you would do then
If the veil were torn and the Judge stepped in
Live each day like your last breath
Be faithful, strong, and full of depth
No time to slumber, no soul to waste—
Run with resolve, empowered by grace

[Verse 2]
When passions rage or doubts pursue,
Let Jesus' cross come into view.
If others stumble, let them see
A soul that strives for purity.
For every loss, there is a gain;
Through holy tears come heavenly rain.
Let love and labor fill your days,
Let all your life become His praise

[Chorus]
Do now what you would do then
If the veil were torn and the Judge stepped in
Live each day like your last breath
Be faithful, strong, and full of depth
No time to slumber, no soul to waste—
Run with resolve, empowered by grace

[Bridge]
Oh, to pray without restraint,
To praise with joy and no complaint—
To rise above the flesh and need,
And feed on Christ alone indeed.
Till all our strength and peace is found
Where grace and holiness abound

[Final Chorus]
Do now what you would do then
Let zeal and love be your closest friends
Hold nothing back, give all you can—
Be bold, be holy, take your stand
No time to slumber, no soul to waste—
Run with resolve, empowered by grace

THE SECOND BOOK: ADMONITIONS CONCERNING THE INNER LIFE

Chapter 1: On the Inward Life

1. Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is within you."(1) So turn to the Lord with all your heart. Let go of this miserable world, and you'll find rest for your soul. Learn to disregard outward things and give yourself to what is inward, and you'll begin to see the kingdom of God grow within you. The kingdom of God is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, and it does not belong to the wicked. Christ will come to you and show you His comfort—if you make your heart a worthy home for Him. His beauty and glory are found within, and that's where He loves to dwell. He often visits the inner person, speaks tenderly, and brings comfort, peace, and a wonderful friendship.

2. Come on, faithful soul, prepare your heart for this Bridegroom so He will graciously come to you and live within you. For He has said, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him."(2) So make room for Christ and refuse entry to anything else. If you have Christ, you are rich and lack nothing. He will care for you and watch over you faithfully in everything, so you don't need to place your trust in other people. People change quickly and pass away like the wind—but Christ remains forever and stands firm beside us to the very end.

3. You shouldn't place your hope in weak and mortal people, even if they seem useful or dear to you. And don't be too troubled when someone disagrees with or opposes you. The people who are with you today may be against you tomorrow. People's hearts change like the wind. Put your full trust in God. Let Him be your fear and your love. He will answer on your behalf and work out what is best for you. You don't have a permanent home here,(3) and wherever you are, you're just a stranger and a pilgrim. You'll never find lasting peace until you are joined deeply with Christ on the inside.

4. Why do you look around you for peace, when this world can't give it? Your home is in heaven, and everything here should be seen as temporary. Everything passes away—and you along with it. Don't cling to what is passing, or you'll be swept away with it. Set your thoughts on the Most High. Keep calling out to Jesus without ceasing. If you can't lift your thoughts to heavenly things, then rest in the sufferings of Christ. Find shelter in His wounds. If you run to Him with devotion—to the scars from the nails and spear—you will find comfort in trials. You won't be disturbed by what others say, and you'll be able to bear their criticisms with ease.

5. Jesus Himself, while on earth, was hated and rejected. In His greatest hour of need, His friends and companions deserted Him. He was willing to suffer shame and pain—so who are you to complain when things go wrong? Christ had enemies and critics. Do you expect everyone to be your friend and supporter? How will your patience ever be proven if you're never challenged? If you're not willing to suffer hardship, how

can you say you are Christ's friend? Lean on Christ and endure for Christ—if you want to reign with Christ.

6. If you had truly entered into Jesus's heart and tasted even a drop of His love, you would no longer care about your own comfort. You would rejoice even in suffering because the love of Jesus makes us forget ourselves. Whoever truly loves Jesus—without unhealthy attachment to created things—can turn quickly to God, rise above themselves, and enjoy true peace.

7. The one who understands things as they really are, and not merely how they seem or are spoken of, is truly wise—taught by God rather than by people. The one who knows how to live from the inside out doesn't need the right place or season to encounter God. The inward person quickly finds peace, because he isn't totally absorbed in outward things. Nothing in daily life—no duty or job—can block such a soul, because he fits himself into the flow of God's providence. A person who is spiritually ordered inside won't be shaken by the strange or foolish actions of others. The more you're affected by outward things, the more distracted and hindered you'll be.

8. If things were right inside of you—if you were free from evil—you'd find that everything works together for your growth. The reason so many things trouble you is that you haven't yet died fully to yourself or let go of earthly attachments. Nothing entangles the heart like impure love for created things. But if you turn away from worldly comforts, you'll be free to fix your thoughts on heaven and experience deep, inward joy.

(1) Luke 17:21
(2) John 14:23
(3) Hebrews 13:14

Additional Bible References

- **Romans 14:17** – "For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."
- **Matthew 6:33** – "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided to you."
- **Philippians 3:20** – "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ."
- **Colossians 3:2** – "Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth."
- **Psalm 62:5** – "My soul, wait in silence for God alone, for my hope is from Him."

The Secret Place Within

[Verse 1]
In the quiet heart, a whisper calls,
A voice that breaks through earthly walls.
Not found in gold, not loud or proud,
But hidden far from the grasping crowd.

[Chorus]
The kingdom comes not with a shout,
But deep within, where fears give out.
O Christ, make my heart Your throne,
In You, I find I'm not alone.

[Verse 2]
The world may fade, its charm be gone,
Its praise a breeze, not lasting long.
But You remain when all else flies,
The Peace who hears my inward cries.

[Bridge]
If I could drink just one small taste
Of Jesus' love, my heart would race
To throw off pride, let go of sin,
And let the King come reign within.

[Chorus]
The kingdom comes not with a shout,
But deep within, where fears give out.
O Christ, make my heart Your throne,
In You, I find I'm not alone.

[Outro]
So here I lay my idols down,
To wear a cross instead of crown.
For heaven starts inside the soul—
Where Christ moves in and makes me whole.

Chapter 2: On Humble Submission

1. Don't make a big deal out of who is for you or against you. Just focus on doing your duty today and make sure that God is with you in everything you do. Keep a clear conscience, and God will defend you—because no one can truly harm someone whom God supports. If you know how to stay silent and endure, you will certainly see the Lord's help. He knows the right time and the best way to deliver you, so you must entrust yourself to Him. It is God's role to help and to rescue from shame and confusion. Often, it's actually good for our humility when others see our faults and correct us.

2. When someone humbles themselves over their failures, they're able to calm others and make peace quickly with those who are angry. God protects and rescues the humble. He loves and comforts the humble. He leans toward the humble, gives them great grace, and when they are brought low, He lifts them up in honor. He reveals His secrets to the humble and gently draws them closer to Himself. Even when the humble are insulted, they remain at peace because their hope rests in God and not in the world. Don't consider yourself to have made any spiritual progress unless you feel yourself to be less than everyone else.

Additional Bible References

- **James 4:6** – "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."
- **1 Peter 5:6** – "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you at the proper time."
- **Psalm 25:9** – "He leads the humble in justice, and He teaches the humble His way."
- **Proverbs 3:34** – "Though He scoffs at the scoffers, yet He gives grace to the needy."
- **Isaiah 57:15** – "I dwell in a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit."

Bend Me Low

[Verse 1]
I don't need the world to praise my name,
Or fight my battles or stake my claim.
I only need to do what's right,
And walk with God in morning light.

[Chorus]
Bend me low, till pride is gone,
Let me rest where grace is strong.
Though the world may pass me by,
Your eyes see me—and that's enough,
Most High.

[Verse 2]
If others point and say I've failed,
I'll trust the One whose hands were nailed.
In silence, I will wait and pray—
The Lord will rescue in His way.

[Bridge]
Lift the low, break the proud,
Raise the humble from the crowd.
You are near when none defend,
You are faithful to the end.

[Chorus]
Bend me low, till pride is gone,
Let me rest where grace is strong.
Though the world may pass me by,
Your eyes see me—and that's enough,
Most High.

[Outro]
Let me serve in hidden ways,
Known to You through all my days.
Humble heart and conscience clean—
This alone is victory seen.

Chapter 3: On the Good and Peaceful Person

1. Keep yourself at peace first, and then you'll be able to help bring peace to others. A peaceful person does more good than someone who is merely well-educated. Someone ruled by emotion turns even good into evil and is quick to believe the worst, but a good, peaceable person turns everything toward the good. The one who lives in peace is not suspicious of others, but the one who is restless and unhappy is full of suspicions and brings unrest both to himself and to those around him. He often says things he shouldn't and leaves undone what would have been better. He focuses on the responsibilities of others while neglecting his own. Therefore, be diligent with yourself first—only then can you rightly concern yourself with your neighbor.

2. You know well how to excuse and justify your own actions, but you won't accept the excuses of others. It would be better if you blamed yourself and excused your brother. If you want others to be patient with you, be patient with them. See how far you still are from true love and humility—love that is never angry or offended at anyone but oneself. It's no great thing to live in peace with kind and gentle people; everyone naturally enjoys that, and we all prefer the company of those who think as we do. But to live in peace with the difficult, the disordered, and the ones who oppose you—that is a rare grace and highly commendable.

3. Some people live in peace and promote peace in others. Some have no peace and keep others from having peace too; they are a burden to others, but even more to themselves. Then there are those who maintain inner peace and do their best to lead others into it. Even so, all true peace in this broken life comes more from humble endurance than from the absence of hardship. The one who knows best how to suffer will have the most peace. Such a person conquers himself, masters the world, becomes a friend of Christ, and inherits heaven.

Additional Bible References

- **Matthew 5:9** – "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God."
- **Romans 12:18** – "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all people."
- **Proverbs 15:1** – "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."
- **Colossians 3:15** – "Let the peace of Christ, to which you were indeed called in one body, rule in your hearts."
- **James 3:18** – "And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace."

The Quiet Heart

[Verse 1]
Let peace begin in me, O Lord,
Before I speak a single word.
Teach me first to still my soul,
Before I try to make others whole.

[Chorus]
Make me a quiet heart,
Gentle and set apart.
Where love can rule and anger cease,
Let me become Your voice of peace.

[Verse 2]
When others fail or go astray,
Help me to walk the humble way.
Excuse their faults as I would mine,
And mirror grace through love divine.

[Bridge]
It's easy to love the kind and fair,
But harder still to meet despair
With patience deep and mercy wide—
O Spirit, be my strength, my guide.

[Chorus]
Make me a quiet heart,
Gentle and set apart.
Where love can rule and anger cease,
Let me become Your voice of peace.

[Outro]
And when I suffer wrong or pain,
Let praise, not bitterness, remain.
So I may walk where Jesus trod—
At peace with man, at peace with God.

Chapter 4: On a Pure Heart and Simple Intention

1. It is by two wings that a person is lifted above the things of this world: simplicity and purity. Simplicity guides the intention; purity shapes the affection. Simplicity reaches toward God; purity takes hold of Him and delights in Him. No good work will ever burden you if your heart is free from selfish desire. If you seek nothing but God's will and the well-being of your neighbor, you will enjoy inward freedom. If your heart were truly right, every created thing would become to you a reflection of life and a book of divine teaching. There is no creature so small or humble that it does not reveal something of God's goodness.

2. If you were good and pure within, you would look on all things rightly and without harm. A pure heart sees into the depths of both heaven and hell. As a person is on the inside, so does he perceive things on the outside. If there is joy to be found in the world, the one with a pure heart possesses it. If there is tribulation and sorrow, the guilty conscience knows it best. Just as iron thrown into fire loses its rust and becomes red-hot, so the person who turns entirely toward God is set free from laziness and becomes changed into a new creation.

3. When someone begins to grow spiritually cold, they start to dread even small efforts and eagerly seek comfort from outward things. But once they truly begin to overcome themselves and walk boldly in God's way, then even things that once seemed heavy and painful become light and insignificant.

Additional Bible References

- **Matthew 5:8** – "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."
- **1 Timothy 1:5** – "The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from a sincere faith."
- **Titus 1:15** – "To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure."
- **Psalm 24:3–4** – "Who may ascend onto the hill of the Lord? ... One who has clean hands and a pure heart."
- **Romans 12:2** – "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Set Me Ablaze Again

[Verse 1]
Lift me above the dust and clay,
On wings of truth and love today.
Let simple trust and hearts made clean
Rise where your glory can be seen.

[Chorus]
Set me ablaze again, O Lord,
Burn off the rust, refine me more.
With purity and love sincere,
Draw me where You are near.

[Verse 2]
Teach me to seek no earthly prize,
But only what will please Your eyes.
Let every creature point the way
To You who formed the light of day.

[Bridge]
When my heart grows cold and slow,
Fan the flame and make it glow.
Make burdens light that once felt great,
Restore my joy before it's late.

[Chorus]
Set me ablaze again, O Lord,
Burn off the rust, refine me more.
With purity and love sincere,
Draw me where You are near.

[Outro]
A mirror of Your life I'll be,
A heart that loves transparently.
And through the fire I'll rise above,
Refined by grace, restored by love.

Chapter 5: On Self-Esteem

1. We should place very little confidence in ourselves, because grace and wisdom are often lacking. The light within us is dim, and what little we have is easily lost through carelessness. We frequently fail to recognize just how blind we are on the inside. We often do wrong and then excuse it even worse. Sometimes we're driven by passion and call it zeal; we point out minor faults in others while ignoring serious ones in ourselves. We're quick to feel and tally what we suffer from others, but we rarely reflect on how much others have to bear from us. Anyone who carefully examined and judged their own actions would not be quick to judge others harshly.

2. The spiritually-minded person puts personal correction above all other concerns. One who pays close attention to his own heart will not feel the need to speak about others. You will never become spiritual or godly unless you stop involving yourself in other people's affairs and instead devote your full attention to your own. If you think continually about yourself and about God, the things happening around you will hardly disturb you. Where are you when you are not present to yourself? And what have you gained if you explore everything outside yourself, but ignore your own soul? If you want peace and true spiritual unity, you must set aside other distractions and focus only on your own walk.

3. You will make great progress if you keep yourself free from all worldly distractions. You will fall quickly if you place any value on earthly things. Let nothing be great to you, nothing high, nothing pleasing, nothing desirable except for God Himself or what belongs to Him. Count as worthless anything that brings you comfort apart from God. A soul that truly loves God looks beyond everything that is less than God. For God alone is eternal and beyond our grasp—He fills all things, brings rest to the soul, and is the true joy of the heart.

Additional Bible References

- **Proverbs 3:5** – "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding."
- **Romans 12:3** – "...do not think more highly of yourself than you ought to think, but think so as to have sound judgment..."
- **Lamentations 3:40** – "Let's examine and search out our ways, and let's return to the Lord."
- **1 Corinthians 10:12** – "Therefore let the one who thinks he stands watch out that he does not fall."
- **Galatians 6:4** – "But each one must examine his own work... and not compare himself with another."

Only You Are Great

[Verse 1]
I often think I know the way,
But stumble through the light of day.
Quick to excuse, slow to see,
The faults that lie inside of me.

[Chorus]
Only You are great, O God,
All I have is flawed and small.
Strip away my prideful heart,
Be my everything, my all.

[Verse 2]
I chase the shadows, miss the flame,
Point the finger, shift the blame.
But when I bow and seek Your face,
I'm wrapped again in mercy's grace.

[Bridge]
Turn my gaze from worldly things,
From fleeting joys and rusted rings.
Fix my soul on truth alone—
My joy, my anchor, Christ enthroned.

[Chorus]
Only You are great, O God,
All I have is flawed and small.
Strip away my prideful heart,
Be my everything, my all.

[Outro]
Let me die to lesser loves,
Rest in peace that's from above.
With a soul to You aligned,
I leave all lesser lights behind.

Chapter 6: On the Joy of a Good Conscience

1. The testimony of a good conscience is the glory of a righteous person. Keep a clear conscience, and you will always have joy. A good conscience can endure much and remains joyful even in adversity, but a guilty conscience is always anxious and restless. You will rest peacefully if your heart does not accuse you. Only rejoice when you've done what is right. The wicked never experience true joy or inner peace, for the Lord says, "There is no peace for the wicked."(1) And if they claim, "We're at peace—nothing can harm us—who can touch us?" do not believe them, for suddenly the wrath of God will arise against them. Their deeds will be exposed as worthless, and their schemes will collapse.

2. Rejoicing in suffering is not hard for one who truly loves, for such rejoicing is glorying in the cross of Christ. The praise of people is short-lived. The fame of this world always brings sorrow in its shadow. The good find their honor in a clean conscience, not in the words of men. The joy of the upright comes from God and is found in truth. One who seeks eternal and true glory cares little for what is fleeting, while the one who craves human praise—or even disdains it from pride—shows little love for heaven. A person who is unmoved by either praise or criticism has found great peace.

3. A pure conscience brings peace and contentment. You are not more holy when praised, nor are you less worthy when insulted. You are what you are, and you cannot be more than what God says of you. If you reflect honestly on your inner life, you won't care much about what others say. People look at outward appearances, but the Lord looks at the heart. (2) People see the actions, but God weighs the motives. It is a mark of humility to do good and think little of yourself. It is a sign of deep purity and inward faith when you do not seek comfort from anything created.

4. The one who does not look for praise from others shows clearly that they have entrusted themselves entirely to God. For, as Paul says, "It is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends."(3) Walking in close fellowship with God, free from attachment to outward things, is the life of a truly spiritual person.

Additional Bible References

- **1 John 3:21** – "Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God."
- **Romans 5:3** – "...we also celebrate in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance."
- **Proverbs 28:1** – "The wicked flee when no one is pursuing, but the righteous are bold as a lion."

- **Psalm 32:1–2** – "Blessed is the one whose wrongdoing is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man whose guilt the Lord does not take into account..."

- **Galatians 6:4** – "Each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting, but to himself alone, and not to another."

A Quiet Heart

[Verse 1]
A quiet heart, a soul at peace,
When shame and fear and striving cease.
No praise I need, no fear of blame,
My joy is found in Jesus' name.

[Chorus]
Let my conscience shine like gold,
Tested, faithful, tried and bold.
What the world may speak or see,
Lord, my worth is found in Thee.

[Verse 2]
When storms arise and shadows fall,
Your whisper stills them all.
I do not crave the praise of men,
But long to hear “Well done” again.

[Bridge]
O keep me pure, O make me true,
To walk each day alone with You.
Let love for truth and not acclaim
Refine my heart in holy flame.

[Chorus]
Let my conscience shine like gold,
Tested, faithful, tried and bold.
What the world may speak or see,
Lord, my worth is found in Thee.

[Outro]
I rest in peace, I live in grace,
Content to run this holy race.
My joy is clear, my path is free—
God sees within, and walks with me.

[Chorus]
Let my conscience shine like gold,
Tested, faithful, tried and bold.
What the world may speak or see,
Lord, my worth is found in Thee.

Chapter 7: On Loving Jesus Above All Things

1. Blessed is the one who understands what it means to love Jesus and to humble himself for Jesus' sake. He must surrender everything he loves for the sake of his Beloved, for Jesus demands to be loved above all else. Love for created things is deceptive and unstable, but love for Jesus is faithful and enduring. Whoever clings to created things will fall with their instability, but the one who embraces Jesus will stand firm forever. Love Him, and hold Him as your truest Friend, for He will never leave you—not even when everyone else does—and He will not let you be lost in the end. Whether you want to or not, one day you will be separated from everything.

2. Cling to Jesus in both life and death, and entrust yourself entirely to His faithfulness. When everyone else fails you, He alone will be able to help. He is a Lover so holy that He tolerates no rival, but desires your whole heart for Himself and will reign there like a king on His throne. If you learn to let go of every created thing, Jesus will gladly make His home with you. You will soon see how worthless all other trust is if it is placed in people rather than in Jesus. Do not rely on or lean upon a reed blown by the wind, for all people are like grass, and all their splendor is like the flower of the field. (1)

3. You will quickly be deceived if you focus only on people's outward appearance, and if you look for comfort or gain in them, you will often be disappointed. But if you seek Jesus in everything, you will surely find Him. And if you only seek yourself, you will find yourself—but to your own harm. For no one harms himself more than the person who does not seek Jesus.

Additional Bible References

- **Matthew 10:37** – "The one who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me."
- **Philippians 3:8** – "I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord..."
- **John 15:13** – "Greater love has no one than this, that a person will lay down his life for his friends."
- **Psalm 73:25–26** – "Whom do I have in heaven but You? And with You, I desire nothing on earth."
- **Hebrews 13:5** – "I will never desert you, nor will I ever abandon you."

Only Jesus

[Verse 1]
Only Jesus fills the soul,
When the world can give no rest.
All the treasures we let go
Fade beside what He has blessed.
He alone remains the same,
Faithful friend through joy and shame.

[Chorus]
Only Jesus, all I need,
All my longing, He will heed.
Let the earth and sky depart—
He will reign within my heart.

[Verse 2]
When I'm torn by what I see,
Or I lean on what won't last,
Let me turn from vanity,
Cling to Christ and hold Him fast.
He will never walk away—
Love like His will always stay.

[Bridge]
Let me lose all else for You,
Every love be counted loss.
Give me eyes to see what's true—
Life is found beneath Your cross.

[Chorus]
Only Jesus, all I need,
All my longing, He will heed.
Let the earth and sky depart—
He will reign within my heart.

Chapter 8: On the Deep Love of Jesus

1. When Jesus is near, everything is well and nothing feels difficult; but when Jesus is absent, even the simplest things become burdensome. When Jesus does not speak within your heart, all other comfort is empty—but when Jesus says even one word, the soul is deeply refreshed. Did not Mary Magdalene quickly rise from her weeping when Martha told her, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you"?(1) What a joyful moment, when Jesus calls you from sorrow to spiritual delight! How dry and empty you are without Jesus! How foolish and lost you are if you desire anything besides Him! Isn't that a greater loss than losing the whole world?

2. What benefit can the world give you without Jesus? To be without Jesus is the lowest hell, but to be with Jesus is sweet paradise. If Jesus is with you, no enemy can truly harm you. Whoever finds Jesus finds the greatest treasure, good beyond all good; but whoever loses Jesus loses more than the entire world. The poorest person is the one who lives without Jesus, and the richest is the one who lives closely with Him.

3. It is a great skill to know how to live with Jesus, and great wisdom to know how to hold on to Him. Be humble and peaceful, and Jesus will remain with you. Be devout and quiet, and He will not leave you. But if you turn your heart to external things, you will quickly drive Him away. And if you do drive Him off and lose His presence, where will you turn? Who else can truly be your friend? You cannot live long without a true friend—and if Jesus is not your truest Friend, your soul will be desolate. You act foolishly if you put your trust or joy in anyone else. Better to have the whole world against you than to have Jesus offended by you. So let Jesus be your most beloved of all.

4. Love everyone for the sake of Jesus, but love Jesus for who He is. He alone deserves your deepest love, for He alone is entirely good and completely faithful. For His sake, both friends and enemies should be dear to you, and you should pray for them all—that they might come to know and love Him. Don't desire praise or special affection for yourself, because that belongs to God alone. And don't give your heart away to any person; instead, let Jesus dwell in your heart, and may He be loved in every faithful soul.

5. Be pure and free within, not entangled by any created thing. You must bring a bare and clean heart to God if you want to truly experience His goodness. And in truth, unless God's grace first touches you and draws you in, you won't be able to reach that place where you've cast aside everything else and are united to Him alone. When the grace of God comes, you can do all things. When it departs, you are weak and troubled. Even then, do not despair. Rest peacefully in God's will and endure whatever comes to honor Jesus Christ—for after winter comes summer, after night comes day, and after the storm comes a great calm.

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 73:28** – "But as for me, the nearness of God is good for me."
- **Philippians 3:10** – "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings..."
- **John 15:5** – "Apart from Me you can do nothing."
- **Romans 8:35** – "Who will separate us from the love of Christ?"
- **Lamentations 3:24** – "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I wait for Him."

More Than the World

[Verse 1]
When I have Jesus, I need no more,
He opens every bolted door.
The world may tempt, the storm may rise,
But peace remains when Jesus is nigh.

[Chorus]
More than the world, more than my breath,
Jesus, You're life in the face of death.
Riches may fade, kingdoms may fall,
But You're my treasure, my All in All.

[Verse 2]
When I have wandered, You called my name,
You drew me close through tears and shame.
No friend so true, no love so wide,
Forever, Lord, with You I'll abide.

[Bridge]
Winter will pass, the dawn will break,
Your love endures, no storm can shake.
Through darkest night or fiercest flame,
My heart still whispers Jesus' name.

[Chorus]
More than the world, more than my breath,
Jesus, You're life in the face of death.
Riches may fade, kingdoms may fall,
But You're my treasure, my All in All.

Chapter 9: On the Absence of All Comfort

1. It's no great task to ignore human comfort when God's comfort is present. But it is a far greater thing—truly a high calling—to endure the loss of both human and divine comfort for God's sake, to bear inner desolation, and to seek nothing for yourself—not even your own merit. What is so special about being joyful and devout when everything is going your way? That's when everyone rejoices. It's easy to carry on when the grace of God is carrying you. And who feels burdened when they are being upheld by the Almighty and led by His Spirit?

2. We easily welcome comfort and struggle to let go of ourselves. Yet the holy martyr Lawrence triumphed over love for the world—and even love for his godly master—because he turned away from all that was merely sweet or pleasant, and out of love for Christ, accepted even the loss of Pope Sixtus, whom he dearly loved. In this way, he let the Creator's love rule over human affection. So you too must learn to release those closest to you, for the sake of God. And do not be troubled when a friend leaves you, remembering that one day all of us must be parted.

3. A person must strive long and hard within before he learns to completely overcome himself and direct all his affections toward God. The one who leans on himself quickly returns to seeking comfort from people. But a true lover of Christ and a sincere pursuer of virtue doesn't go back to those comforts, nor does he long for what is easy or pleasant. Instead, he desires the hard road and willingly takes on difficult tasks for Christ.

4. So when God gives you spiritual comfort, receive it with gratitude. Know that it is a gift—not something you earned. Don't become prideful or overconfident, but let the gift make you more humble, more cautious, and more obedient. The comfort will pass, and trials will return. When comfort disappears, don't give in to despair. Wait patiently and humbly for God's return—He is able to restore you with even greater blessings. This pattern is nothing new. It's how God has often worked with saints and prophets through the ages.

5. One of them said, "In my prosperity I said, 'I will never be shaken'," (1) but later added, "When You hid Your face, I was dismayed." Yet he didn't lose hope—he cried out to God and prayed for mercy. And God answered, turning his sorrow into joy, removing his sackcloth, and clothing him with gladness. If this happened to the great saints, how much more should we, who are spiritually poor, be prepared for seasons of warmth and seasons of cold. The Holy Spirit moves as He wills. That's why Job said, "You examine him every morning; You try him every moment." (2)

6. What, then, can I trust in? Where is my hope—except in God's abundant mercy and the grace that comes from heaven? Whether I have godly friends, encouraging words, inspiring books, or beautiful songs—all of it feels empty when God's presence is absent and I am left in spiritual poverty. The only remedy then is patience, self-denial, and resting in the will of God.

7. I have never known a saint so devout that they never experienced a withdrawal of God's favor or a cooling of their spiritual fervor. No one was so lifted in vision or insight that temptation did not visit them eventually. A person is not worthy of God's high calling unless they have endured trials for His sake. Temptation is often the forerunner of comfort, and God's promises belong to those who persevere through trial. As it is written, "To the one who overcomes, I will grant to eat from the tree of life."(3)

8. God sends comfort to strengthen us for hard times. And then temptation follows, lest we become proud of the blessing. The devil does not rest. Your sinful nature is still alive. So never stop preparing for the battle, for enemies surround you on every side —and they are always at work.

Additional Bible References

- **2 Corinthians 1:4** – "Who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction."
- **Romans 5:3–4** – "We also celebrate in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance."
- **James 1:2–4** – "Consider it all joy, my brothers and sisters, when you encounter various trials..."
- **Psalm 42:11** – "Why are you in despair, my soul? And why are you restless within me? Wait for God..."
- **1 Peter 5:10** – "After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace... will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen, and establish you."

When Comfort Fades

[Verse 1]
When comfort fades and hope seems lost,
I lift my eyes to Calv'ry's cross.
Though silence fills the midnight air,
I know my Savior still is there.

[Chorus]
So I will wait, though joy departs,
And trust His grace with all my heart.
Though friends may fail and light grow dim,
I'll hold my peace and rest in Him.

[Verse 2]
He gives, He takes, yet loves the same,
And writes His mercy on my name.
The winds may blow, the fires may test,
But in His will, my soul will rest.

[Bridge]
Each trial a gift, each loss a flame,
That burns away all fear and shame.
And when He comes to lift my eyes,
He'll turn my mourning into rise.

[Chorus]
So I will wait, though joy departs,
And trust His grace with all my heart.
Though friends may fail and light grow dim,
I'll hold my peace and rest in Him.

Chapter 10: On Thankfulness for the Grace of God

1. Why do you look for rest when you were born for labor? Train yourself more for patience than for comfort, more for bearing the cross than for enjoying delight. After all, what person wouldn't welcome constant spiritual joy if they could always have it? For the joys of the Spirit far surpass all worldly pleasures and bodily delights. Earthly pleasures are often empty or impure, but spiritual joys are noble and wholesome, flowing from virtue and poured out by God into hearts that are clean. Still, no one can have these divine comforts whenever they wish, because seasons of temptation never stay away for long.

2. There is a great difference between a visitation from God and a false sense of spiritual freedom or overconfidence in oneself. It is good when God gives comfort by grace—but we do poorly when we fail to give Him thanks. Because of our ingratitude, we block the ongoing flow of grace. When we fail to return these gifts to the One who gave them, grace is held back. Grace remains with the one who is grateful, but it is taken away from the proud. God loves to give grace to the humble.

3. I don't want any comfort that weakens my repentance. I don't welcome any spiritual insight that leads to pride. Not everything that feels high is holy; not everything sweet is good. Not every desire is pure, and not everything that feels good is pleasing to God. I gladly accept that grace which makes me more humble, more alert, and more willing to die to self. The one who learns by grace and is trained by its removal will never boast in his own goodness but will humbly confess his poverty. Give God what belongs to Him,(1) and accept for yourself what is truly yours—that is, give God thanks for His grace, and take full responsibility for your own faults and the discipline they deserve.

4. Always choose the lowest place, and you will be given the highest. (2) The highest cannot stand without the lowest. God's greatest saints see themselves as the least. The more glory they are given, the more lowly they are in their own eyes. Filled with grace and heavenly light, they have no interest in human praise. Resting in God and strengthened by His power, they have no pride in themselves. They give all credit for what they have received to God, and they seek not the glory of people but only the glory that comes from God. They want God to be praised both in Himself and in His saints—and that is the goal they pursue in everything.

5. Be thankful for even the smallest gift, and you will be ready to receive greater ones. Let the least benefit seem great to you, and the smallest blessing seem like a special treasure. When you consider the majesty of the Giver, nothing will seem unimportant—for nothing is truly small that comes from the Most High. Even when God sends hardship or discipline, we should be grateful, knowing He is doing it for our good. Whoever wants to keep God's favor must give thanks for what is given and patiently endure what is taken away. He should pray for grace to return and walk in humility so as not to lose it again.

Additional Bible References

- **1 Thessalonians 5:18** – "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus."
- **James 1:17** – "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights."
- **Philippians 4:11–12** – "I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am."
- **Psalm 103:2** – "Bless the Lord, my soul, and do not forget any of His benefits."
- **Hebrews 12:11** – "All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterward it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness."

All That He Gives

[Verse 1]
All that He gives, if joy or pain,
Comes from His hand, not giv'n in vain.
Whether in bounty or in drought,
He teaches trust when hope runs out.

[Chorus]
So I will thank Him, come what may,
For light or dark, for night or day.
His grace sustains, His love forgives,
I'll praise Him for all He gives.

[Verse 2]
The smallest gift, the faintest ray,
Reflects His heart along the way.
The loss I feel, the trial I face,
Is sent to shape me by His grace.

[Bridge]
Even when comfort takes its flight,
His mercy holds me through the night.
In every season, He is near—
His purpose perfect, crystal clear.

[Chorus]
So I will thank Him, come what may,
For light or dark, for night or day.
His grace sustains, His love forgives,
I'll praise Him for all that He gives.

Chapter 11: On the Few Who Truly Love the Cross of Jesus

1. Jesus has many who love His heavenly kingdom, but few who are willing to carry His cross. Many seek His comfort, but few embrace His suffering. Many want to share in His table, but few in His fasting. Everyone wants to rejoice with Him, but few are willing to endure anything for His sake. Many follow Jesus to receive the loaves, but few follow to drink from the cup of His suffering. Many marvel at His miracles, but few pursue the disgrace of His cross. Many love Jesus as long as there are no trials. They praise and bless Him as long as they're receiving blessings. But if He hides His face for a little while or withdraws His comfort, they quickly fall into complaint or discouragement.

2. But those who love Jesus for who He is—not just for what He gives—praise Him in tribulation as they do in consolation. And if He never gave them any comfort at all, they would still bless Him and give Him thanks.

3. Oh, what strength there is in the pure love of Jesus, a love unmixed with self-interest or personal gain! Should we not call "mercenaries" those who always seek comfort? Are they not really lovers of themselves rather than of Christ, since their only desire is their own benefit? Who can be found who is truly willing to serve God without expecting a reward?

4. It is rare to find someone so spiritual that they are entirely free from self-centeredness. Who is truly poor in spirit and detached from all created things? "His worth is far away, found at the ends of the earth." A person may give away all their possessions—and that is still nothing. Even if they perform many acts of penance, it is a small thing. Even if they possess great knowledge, it still falls short. Even if they are virtuous and deeply devout, there is still one thing lacking—one thing more essential than all the rest: to give up *themselves*, completely. To leave all self-love behind. To do every duty and still feel as though nothing has been accomplished. To regard what the world calls "much" as nothing, and to see oneself as an "unworthy servant," just as the Truth Himself said: *"When you have done all that was commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy servants.'"*(1)

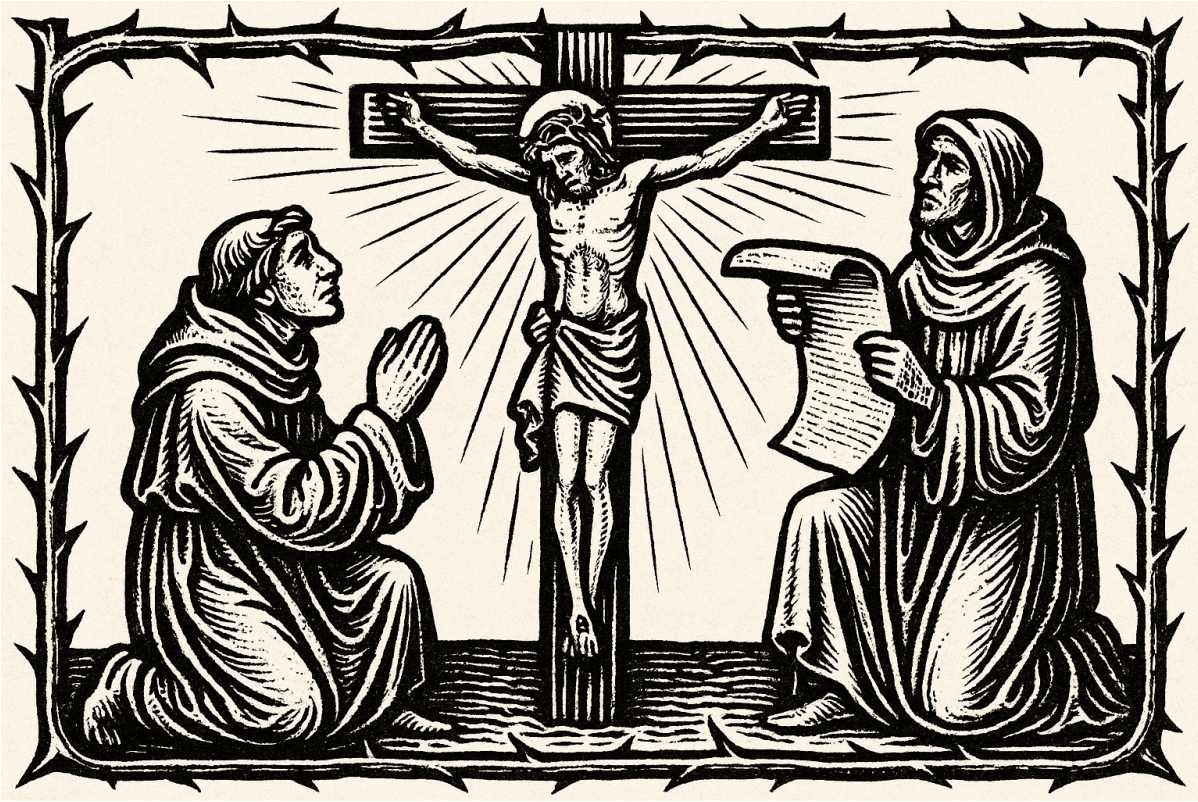
   Then, and only then, can a person be truly poor and naked in spirit and say with the Psalmist, *"But I am afflicted and needy."*(2) Yet in God's sight, no one is richer, no one is stronger, no one is freer. For that person knows how to surrender all things—including themselves—and humbly take the lowest place.

Additional Bible References

- **Philippians 3:10** – "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death."

- **Mark 8:34** – "If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me."

- **Galatians 6:14** – "But far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."
- **2 Corinthians 12:9** – "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."
- **Romans 8:17** – "If we suffer with Him, so that we may also be glorified with Him."



Only the Few

[Verse 1]
Jesus has many who call on His name,
Lovers of glory but not of the flame.
They gather for feasting, they run to the light,
But few will walk with Him deep in the night.

[Chorus]
Only the few will carry the cross,
Counting their gain as nothing but loss.
Only the few will walk through the pain,
Loving the Lamb who bore their shame.

[Verse 2]
Many will praise Him when comfort is near,
But vanish in silence when trial draws near.
Yet love that is true will kneel in the dust,
And cling to the cross with unshaken trust.

[Bridge]
Not for the blessing, not for the prize,
But only to gaze in the Savior's eyes.
To love Him when nothing is left to receive,
To worship in loss, to follow, believe.

[Chorus]
Only the few will carry the cross,
Counting their gain as nothing but loss.
Only the few will walk through the pain,
Loving the Lamb who bore their shame.

Chapter 12: The Royal Way of the Holy Cross

1. Many people find it hard to accept Jesus' words: "If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me."(1) But it will be far worse to hear these words at the end: "Depart from Me, you who practice wickedness, into the eternal fire."(2) Those who now embrace the message of the Cross and follow it won't need to fear judgment. The sign of the Cross will appear in the sky when Christ returns, and all who lived by it—who were conformed to the Crucified—will draw near to Him with great confidence.

2. So why fear the Cross that leads to a Kingdom? In the Cross is healing, life, protection from enemies, spiritual sweetness, strength of mind, joy, virtue, and holiness. Apart from the Cross, there is no health for the soul and no hope for eternal life. Take up your cross, then, and follow Jesus. He went before you with His Cross and died on it for you, so that you might also love the Cross and be crucified with Him. If you die with Him, you will also live with Him; if you suffer with Him, you will also be glorified with Him.

3. Everything rests on the Cross. Everything depends on dying to self. There is no other path to life or to deep inner peace than the path of the Holy Cross and daily self-denial. You can go wherever you want, pursue whatever you will, but you won't find a higher or safer path than this. Plan and arrange your life as you wish—still, you will encounter suffering, one way or another. Your cross will come either in bodily pain or inward struggle.

4. Sometimes God may seem distant. At times, you'll be tested by others. And often, you'll find yourself tiresome, even to yourself. No remedy will remove this cross—you will need to bear it as long as God wills. He wants you to learn to endure without comfort, to humble yourself, and to be shaped through suffering. No one understands the suffering of Christ like the one who has suffered deeply himself. The Cross is always nearby, always waiting. You bring yourself wherever you go—and wherever you are, you'll find the Cross again. Whether you look within or without, you'll need patience if you want peace and the eternal crown.

5. If you carry the Cross willingly, it will carry you. It will lead you to your goal—the place where suffering ends, though not in this life. If you carry it unwillingly, you increase your burden. Even if you throw one cross aside, you'll find another—possibly heavier.

6. Do you hope to escape what no mortal has ever avoided? Which saint lived without a cross? Not even Jesus Himself lived one hour without suffering. He said that the Christ must suffer and rise again to enter His glory. (3) So why would you seek another way than the way of the Holy Cross?

7. The whole life of Christ was a cross. Why would you expect rest or joy? If you seek only comfort, you're missing the purpose of this life. Life is filled with sorrow and

surrounded by crosses. The more a person grows in the Spirit, the heavier crosses they may bear—because love deepens the pain of exile from God's full presence.

8. But those afflicted in many ways are not without comfort. They find that bearing the Cross produces a deep and fruitful joy. The more their flesh is afflicted, the more their soul is strengthened by God's grace. Some even begin to long for trials, desiring to be united with the sufferings of Christ. They believe that the more they suffer for Him, the more pleasing they are to God. This strength is not from human nature but from the grace of Christ. It makes the soul desire what the body fears.

9. It is not natural to love the Cross, to subdue the body, to flee honor, to bear insults quietly, or to accept loss and scorn. But if you trust in the Lord, strength will be given to you from heaven. Even the devil will not shake you if you are armed with faith and the Cross of Christ.

10. So take up the Cross like a faithful servant of Christ. Prepare for trials and suffering wherever you go—there's no escaping it. Drink your Lord's cup with love if you want to be His friend and share His life. Leave comfort in God's hands. Accept suffering and consider it your truest comfort, for "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."(4)

11. When you can find joy in suffering for Christ, know that it is well with your soul—you have found paradise on earth. As long as you try to avoid suffering, things will go badly, and troubles will find you anyway.

12. But if you choose to suffer and to die to yourself, peace will follow. Even if you were caught up to the third heaven like Paul (5), you are not exempt from trials. Jesus said of him, "I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake."(6) Suffering is your calling if you truly love and follow Jesus.

13. Oh, if only you were counted worthy to suffer even a little for Jesus! What glory would await you, what joy among the saints, and what a witness to others! Everyone praises patience, though few are willing to practice it. Surely you can endure a little for Christ when so many suffer so much for the world.

14. Understand this: you are meant to live as someone who is dying. The more you die to yourself, the more you live unto God. You cannot understand heavenly things unless you've submitted to earthly suffering. Nothing pleases God more or benefits you more than suffering for Jesus' sake. If you could choose, you ought to prefer affliction for Christ over any comfort—because that makes you more like Christ and His saints. Growth in grace doesn't come from comfort, but from enduring many trials.

15. If there had been a better or more helpful path to spiritual health, Christ would have shown it. But He called all His followers to take up their cross. So here is the bottom line: "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."(8)

(1) Matthew 16:24
(2) Matthew 25:41
(3) Luke 24:46
(4) Romans 8:18
(5) 2 Corinthians 12:2
(6) Acts 9:16
(7) Luke 9:23
(8) Acts 14:21

Additional Bible References

- **Philippians 1:29** – "For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer on His behalf."
- **2 Timothy 2:12** – "If we endure, we will also reign with Him."
- **Hebrews 12:2** – "Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the originator and perfecter of the faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross..."
- **Matthew 10:38** – "And the one who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me."
- **Galatians 6:14** – "May it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ…"

The Cross Before Me

[Verse 1]
I hear Your call, Lord, quiet and clear—
"Take up your cross, draw ever near."
Not to comfort or crown I run,
But to follow the path of the Son.

[Chorus]
The Cross before me, the world behind,
No greater love will my soul find.
Though sorrow walks where mercy trod,
I walk this way with the Son of God.

[Verse 2]
Each step is hard, but full of grace,
You meet me still in the loneliest place.
In weakness, strength; in loss, Your gain,
Through every cross, Your glory reigns.

[Bridge]
If I must suffer, let it be
To make me more like Calvary.
For joy will rise where tears have flown,
And I'll find peace before Your throne.

[Chorus]
The Cross before me, the world behind,
No greater love will my soul find.
Though sorrow walks where mercy trod,
I walk this way with the Son of God.

[Outro]
So here I stand—no turning back,
The Cross my banner, the narrow track.
I carry it until that day
You wipe all tears and lead the way.

THE THIRD BOOKS: ON INWARD CONSOLATION

Chapter 1: Of the Inward Voice of Christ to the Faithful Soul

1. I will listen for what the Lord God says within me.
   Blessed is the soul that hears the Lord speaking inwardly and receives comfort from His voice.
   Blessed are the ears that catch the whisper of God and are not turned aside by the noise of the world.
   Blessed are the ears that ignore outward voices and listen instead to the truth being taught within.
   Blessed are the eyes that are blind to outward distractions but fixed on the things of the Spirit.
   Blessed are those who search the inner life and discipline themselves daily to better receive the mysteries of heaven.
   Blessed are those who long to be alone with God, freeing themselves from all the world's entanglements.
   Think on these things, O my soul, and close the door to your worldly cravings, that you may hear what the Lord God speaks within you.

2. This is what your Beloved says:
   "I am your salvation. I am your peace. I am your life. Stay near Me, and you will find peace.
   Turn away from what passes away, and seek what is eternal.
   What are temporary things but illusions? What good are created things if you lose the Creator?
   So let go of all else, and give yourself to your Maker—be faithful and pleasing in His sight—so you may enter into true happiness."

   Psalm 85:8

Additional Bible References

- **John 10:27** – "My sheep listen to My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me."
- **Revelation 3:20** – "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me."
- **Isaiah 30:21** – "Your ears will hear a word behind you, 'This is the way, walk in it,' whenever you turn to the right or to the left."
- **Matthew 6:6** – "But when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret..."
- **Colossians 3:2** – "Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth."

Voice Within

[Verse 1]
In the quiet of my soul, I hear You call
Not in thunder, not in fire, but a whisper small
Turning from the world that pulls me far away
I draw near, and I hear what You say

[Chorus]
Speak, Lord, I am listening
My heart is Yours alone
Let the noise of earth grow distant
As You make my spirit Your home
In the stillness, I will stay
'Til Your voice becomes my way

[Verse 2]
Every fleeting thing has lost its shine
But Your words still echo deep inside
You are peace, You are truth, You are life in me
My delight is in Your mystery

[Bridge]
Shut the door, still my mind
Leave distraction far behind
Let me dwell where You reside
Forever by Your side

[Chorus]
Speak, Lord, I am listening
My heart is Yours alone
Let the noise of earth grow distant
As You make my spirit Your home
In the stillness, I will stay
'Til Your voice becomes my way

Chapter 2: What the Truth Says Inwardly Without the Noise of Words

1. “Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening.”(1) I am Your servant. Please give me insight so that I may understand Your Word. Turn my heart toward the words that come from Your mouth. (2) Let Your voice settle like the dew. The people of Israel once said to Moses, “Speak to us yourself and we will listen, but don’t let God speak to us, or we’ll die.”(3) But not so with me, Lord—not so! I ask, like Samuel the prophet, humbly and earnestly: “Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening.” I don’t want Moses or any prophet to speak in Your place. Let it be You, Lord, who inspired and enlightened all the prophets. You can speak to me directly, fully, and clearly. Without You, even the prophets gain me nothing.

2. Yes, others may speak words, but only You can give the Spirit. They may speak with eloquence, but unless You are speaking, they cannot ignite the heart. They may give us Scripture, but You reveal its meaning. They can talk about mysteries, but only You can open my understanding. They may issue commands, but You enable obedience. They may show the path, but You supply the strength to walk it. They teach the outward things, but You enlighten the heart. They water the ground, but You make it grow. They speak in words, but You give wisdom to the hearer.

3. So I say again: Let no man speak in Your place—speak Yourself, O Lord my God, Eternal Truth—so that I don’t hear only outwardly and remain unchanged inwardly. I don’t want to know and not love, to believe and not obey. I don’t want Your Word to rise against me in the day of judgment because I heard but did not follow. Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening. You have the words of eternal life. (4) Speak to comfort my soul, transform my life, and glorify Your holy Name forever.

(1) 1 Samuel 3:9
(2) Psalm 119:125
(3) Exodus 20:19
(4) John 6:68

Additional Bible References

- **Hebrews 4:12** – "For the word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword… it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."
- **James 1:22** – "But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not just hearers who deceive themselves."
- **Isaiah 30:21** – "Your ears will hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it,' whenever you turn to the right or the left."
- **Romans 10:17** – "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."
- **John 10:27** – "My sheep listen to My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me."

Speak, Lord, I'm Listening

[Verse 1]
Speak, Lord, I'm listening
Still all the noise inside
Open my heart for wisdom
Your voice I won't let slide.
Not Moses, not the prophets,
Let me hear You alone—
The whisper that brings comfort
From Your eternal throne.

[Chorus]
Your Word is life and healing,
Sharper than any blade.
It cuts, it cleanses, it teaches—
It never will fade.
I'm not here for empty talking,
But for truth that sets me free.
So speak, Lord, I'm listening—
Reveal Yourself to me.

[Verse 2]
Men may bring the water,
But You, O Lord, give rain.
They light a match in darkness,
But You consume the flame.
Without Your Spirit breathing,
The words just fall apart—
But when You speak, O Jesus,
You ignite my heart.

[Bridge]
Even when You whisper,
It thunders in my soul—
Correction, peace, and mercy
To make the sinner whole.
So speak to me in silence,
And draw me close again.
No voice but Yours will satisfy—
Forever, Lord. Amen.

[Chorus]
Your Word is life and healing,
Sharper than any blade.
It cuts, it cleanses, it teaches—
It never will fade.
I'm not here for empty talking,
But for truth that sets me free.
So speak, Lord, I'm listening—
Reveal Yourself to me.

Chapter 3: How all the words of God are to be heard with humility, and how many consider them not

1. “My child, listen to My words, for they are sweeter than anything else, surpassing all the wisdom of the philosophers and scholars of this world. My words are spirit and life (1), and they are not to be judged by human reasoning. They are not to be used for seeking praise, but are to be heard in silence, received with humility, and treasured with deep love.”

2. And I said, “Blessed is the one You teach, Lord, and whom You instruct from Your Word, to give them peace in times of trouble,(2) and so they are not left desolate on the earth.”

3. “I,” says the Lord, “taught the prophets from the beginning, and I still speak to all people—but many are deaf and hardened against My voice. Many would rather listen to the world than to God; they chase after the desires of the flesh more eagerly than after the will of God. The world promises small and temporary things, and people serve it with great passion. I promise eternal and priceless things, and yet the hearts of people are slow to move. Who serves and obeys Me in all things with the same diligence as they serve the world and its leaders?

   Be ashamed, O Sidon, says the sea;(3)
   And if you seek wisdom, listen to Me.

   For a small reward, people travel great distances; but for eternal life, many won’t even lift their foot once off the ground. People labor hard for petty prizes; for one coin, they will fight and compete shamefully; but for a meaningless and passing reward, they’ll work day and night.”

4. “But oh, what a disgrace! For an unchangeable good, for an unimaginable reward, for the highest honor and everlasting glory—they find even a little effort too much. Be ashamed, lazy, and ungrateful servant, for others are quicker to chase destruction than you are to pursue life. They delight more in lies than you do in truth. And yet they are often disappointed in their hopes—but My promise fails no one, nor do I ever send away empty the one who trusts in Me. What I promise, I will fulfill. What I have spoken, I will do—if only a person remains faithful in My love to the end. I reward all who do good, and I delight in all who live in godliness.”

5. “Write My words on your heart and think about them often, for they will be essential to you in times of temptation. What you don’t understand when you read, you will come to understand on the day of My visitation. I regularly visit My chosen ones in two ways—by testing and by comforting—and I teach them two lessons daily: to correct their faults and to urge them forward in grace. Anyone who has My words but rejects them will face judgment on the last day.”

A PRAYER FOR THE SPIRIT OF DEVOTION

6. Lord my God, You are my entire good—who am I that I should dare speak to You? I am the least of Your servants, a lowly worm, even more poor and worthless than I realize or dare admit. Yet remember, Lord, that I am nothing, I have nothing, and I can do nothing. You alone are good, just, and holy. You can do all things, rule over all things, and fill all things, except the heart of a sinner. Remember Your mercy and fill my heart with Your grace, because You do not want Your work to return to You void.

7. How could I survive this miserable life without Your mercy and grace to strengthen me? Don't turn Your face away from me. Don't delay Your visitation. Don't remove Your comfort from me, or my soul will gasp for You like dry ground thirsts for rain. Lord, teach me to do Your will. Teach me to walk humbly and faithfully before You, for You are my wisdom. You know me truly, and You knew me before the world was created and before I was born.

(1) John 6:63.
(2) Psalm 94:13.
(3) Isaiah 23:4.

Additional Bible References

- **James 1:22** – "But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not just hearers who deceive themselves."
- **Isaiah 55:11** – "So will My word be which goes out of My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire."
- **2 Timothy 3:16-17** – "All Scripture is inspired by God and beneficial for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness."
- **Psalm 119:11** – "I have treasured Your word in my heart, so that I may not sin against You."
- **Romans 10:17** – "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."

Speak, Lord (I Will Listen)

[Verse 1]
Speak, Lord, I will listen, still my heart within
Your whisper calms the chaos, calls me back again
The world is loud with promise, but empty is its sound
Your truth alone is faithful, where quiet grace is found

[Chorus]
Your Word is life, Your Word is light
It cuts through shadows of the night
I lay it deep within my soul
And let Your Spirit take control

[Verse 2]
Your voice was in the garden, and in the wilderness
You spoke to broken prophets, in mercy and distress
You call me now with wisdom that I can't understand
But You will give me knowledge, when I place it in Your hand

[Chorus]
Your Word is life, Your Word is light
It cuts through shadows of the night
I lay it deep within my soul
And let Your Spirit take control

[Bridge]
Even when I cannot see,
Your truth will still be leading me
Not by sight but by Your Word,
A voice of love still gently heard

[Final Chorus]
Your Word is life, Your Word is light
It leads me through the darkest night
I hold it close, I will obey
And walk with You in truth today

Chapter 4: How we must walk in truth and humility before God

1. "My child, walk before Me in truth, and seek Me continually with a sincere heart. The one who walks in truth before Me will be safe from the attacks of evil, and truth will rescue them from the deceit and slander of the wicked. If the truth sets you free, you will truly be free—and you won't be disturbed by the empty words of people."

2. Lord, what You say is true; let it be so in my life, I pray. Let Your truth teach me, guard me, and keep me safe to the very end. Let it set me free from all evil and from every selfish desire, and I will walk before You with a free and open heart.

3. "I will teach you," says the Truth, "what is right and what pleases Me. Think about your sins with deep sorrow, and never think highly of yourself because of your good works. The truth is, you are a sinner, burdened with many weaknesses, tied and bound by them. Left to yourself, you are drawn toward nothingness; you are quick to fall, quick to give in, quick to be disturbed, and quick to be undone. You have nothing to boast about, but many reasons to consider yourself unworthy—for you are far weaker than you understand.

4. "Therefore, let nothing you do seem great in your own eyes. Don't see anything as grand or valuable or beautiful or worthy of honor—unless it is eternal. Let eternal truth be your greatest delight, and let your own sinfulness always grieve you. Fear, hate, and run from your own faults and sins more than any loss of possessions. Some do not walk sincerely before Me; they're driven by pride and curiosity. They want to know secret things about Me and explore deep doctrines of God, but they ignore their own souls and the path to salvation. These people often fall into serious temptations and sin, because of their pride and curiosity—yes, I oppose them.

5. "Fear God's judgments, and be in awe of the wrath of the Almighty. Avoid arguing over the works of the Most High. Instead, search your own life closely: how serious your sins are, and how many good things you've left undone. Some put their devotion in books, or in religious images, or in outward rituals and signs. Some speak My name with their lips but have little of Me in their hearts. But others—those who have been enlightened in their minds and purified in their affections—long continually for what is eternal. They hear of earthly things with reluctance, and meet the needs of daily life with sorrow. These are the ones who understand what the Spirit of truth is speaking within them. For He teaches them to despise worldly things and to love the things of heaven, to turn from the world, and to long for heaven day and night."

Additional Bible References

- **John 8:31-32** – "If you continue in My word, then you are truly My disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

- **Micah 6:8** – "He has told you, mortal one, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

- **1 Peter 5:5-6** – "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God."

- **Jeremiah 9:23-24** – "Let the one who boasts, boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises mercy, justice, and righteousness on the earth."

- **Psalm 139:23-24** – "Search me, God, and know my heart; put me to the test and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there is any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way."

Nothing But the Truth

[Verse 1]
I will walk before You, Lord, in truth and in Your light
With every step surrendering my pride
Your truth will be my shelter, my shield against the lies
You see my heart, and never pass it by

[Chorus]
I want nothing but the truth
Let it break me, let it move
Every thought and every part
Of my restless, wandering heart
No more chasing earthly pride
Be my portion, be my guide
I want nothing but the truth
Lord, let it live in me

[Verse 2]
Teach me what is holy, and show me what You love
To hate my sin and lift my eyes above
Not looking for approval, not longing for applause
Just resting in Your mercy and Your cross

[Chorus]
I want nothing but the truth
Let it break me, let it move
Every thought and every part
Of my restless, wandering heart
No more chasing earthly pride
Be my portion, be my guide
I want nothing but the truth
Lord, let it live in me

[Bridge]
Search me, test me, know me well
Free me from the pride that fell
Every hidden shadow, bring it to the light
I want to walk in truth, to live what's right

[Final Chorus]
I want nothing but the truth
Let it burn in all I do
Every breath and every choice
Made to echo with Your voice
No more fear of what they see
Only longing after Thee
I want nothing but the truth
Lord, let it live in me

Chapter 5: On the Wonderful Power of Divine Love

1. I bless You, Heavenly Father, Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, because You have looked upon me in my poverty. O Father of mercies and God of all comfort,(1) I give You thanks for refreshing me at times with Your consolation, even though I am unworthy of any comfort. I bless and glorify You continually, with Your only begotten Son and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, forever and ever. O Lord God, holy Lover of my soul, when You come into my heart, my whole being rejoices. You are my glory and the joy of my heart. You are my hope and my refuge in the day of trouble.

2. But because I am still weak in love and imperfect in virtue, I need You to strengthen and comfort me. So visit me often, and teach me Your holy way of discipline. Deliver me from sinful passions, and purify my heart from every disordered affection, so that, being healed and completely cleansed inside, I may be ready to love, strong to endure, and steadfast in faith.

3. Love is a great thing—greater than anything else—and it makes every heavy burden light and every hardship bearable. For love carries the load and makes it seem like no load at all; it turns bitterness into sweetness and struggle into joy. The surpassing love of Jesus stirs us to do great things and drives us toward ever greater growth. Love wants to rise higher, not be dragged down by anything low or selfish. Love desires to be free and untangled from all worldly attachments, so that its spiritual insight isn't blocked or its focus lost in success or overwhelmed in hardship. Nothing is sweeter than love, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing wider, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller or better—in heaven or on earth—for love comes from God and can find rest only in Him, above all created things.

4. The one who loves flies forward, runs joyfully, and lives freely. He gives everything for everything and possesses everything in the One who is over all. He doesn't fixate on the gifts, but on the Giver above all blessings. Love often pushes beyond limits, disregards calculations, takes on what others call impossible, and presses forward because it believes that everything is possible for love. Love can do everything. It accomplishes much, and where someone without love falls short and gives up, love pushes on and prevails.

5. Love keeps watch—even while sleeping. It never grows tired, never gives in, never fears. Like a flame, it blazes upward and overcomes everything. If you love, you know the voice of love—it cries out in your soul with power: “My God, my Beloved! You are mine, and I am Yours!”

6. Enlarge my heart with love, Lord, so I may taste how sweet it is to love—to melt away in love, to swim in it, to be consumed by it. Let love hold me, raising me beyond myself by its burning desire. Let me sing the song of love, follow You my Beloved, and give my soul entirely to praise. Let me love You more than myself—not even loving myself except for Your sake. Let me love others in You, as the law of love commands, which flows from You.

7. Love is quick, sincere, kind, joyful, gentle, strong, patient, faithful, wise, enduring, courageous, and never self-seeking. Wherever someone is seeking self, love has been lost. Love is careful, humble, and honest—not soft or unstable, not drawn to empty things. Love is disciplined, pure, steady, quiet, and guarded in all its actions. Love submits to authority, sees itself as nothing, and is devout and thankful to God. Even when God hides His face, love still trusts. For love cannot exist without suffering.

8. Whoever is not ready to suffer everything and submit entirely to the will of the Beloved is not worthy to be called a true lover of God. The one who loves must gladly take up every burden and trial for the sake of the One he loves, and he must never let go—even when difficulties come.

(1) 2 Corinthians 1:3

Additional Bible References

- **1 John 4:7** – "Beloved, let's love one another; for love is from God, and everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God."
- **Romans 5:5** – "The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."
- **John 14:23** – "If anyone loves Me, he will follow My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him."
- **Song of Solomon 8:7** – "Many waters cannot quench love, nor will rivers flood it; if a man were to give all the riches of his house for love, it would be utterly despised."
- **Matthew 22:37** – "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind."
- **1 Corinthians 13**

Set Me on Fire

[Verse 1]
Set me on fire with Your holy flame
Burn away all my selfish claim
Lift me above what the world calls high
And teach me to live and love and die

[Chorus]
You are my joy, my strength, my song
You carry me when days are long
My heart is Yours, my soul Your own
Forever, Lord, I'm not alone

[Verse 2]
Love that gives and asks no price
Love that walks through every night
Let me follow, let me yield
To the Cross where grace is sealed

[Bridge]
I give You all, not part but whole
My longing heart, my thirsty soul
Hold me, fill me, break my pride
Let Your love be all I find

[Chorus]
You are my joy, my strength, my song
You carry me when days are long
My heart is Yours, my soul Your own
Forever, Lord, I'm not alone

[Outro]
Set me on fire, pure and bright
Shining with Your endless light
Love unshaken, strong and true
Forever, Lord, I burn for You

Chapter 6: Of the Testing of the True Lover

1. “My child, you are not yet strong and wise in love.”

2. Why is that, Lord?

3. “Because at the slightest opposition, you abandon your efforts and seek comfort too eagerly. The strong lover stands firm during temptation and does not believe the deceitful words of the enemy. Just as he is pleased with Me in good times, he is not displeased with Me in adversity.

4. “The wise lover values not so much the gift of the beloved, but the love of the giver. He seeks affection more than the gift’s worth, and he considers every gift as less than the One who gives it. The noble lover rests not in the gift, but in Me above every gift.

5. “You have not lost everything just because you think of Me or My saints less than you wish. That sweet and holy desire you sometimes feel is the result of present grace and a foretaste of the heavenly kingdom. But don’t rely too heavily on it—it comes and goes. Fighting against evil thoughts and resisting the devil’s temptations is a sign of virtue and brings great reward.

6. “Don’t let strange or troubling thoughts disturb you, no matter where they come from. Stay committed to your purpose and your sincere intentions toward God. You are not deceived when you're suddenly lifted into spiritual joy and then quickly brought back to your familiar weaknesses. You are more a victim than a cause of these things. And as long as they displease you and you resist them, you gain merit, not loss.

7. “Be aware: your old enemy always tries to block your progress and to discourage you from every good practice—like remembering the saints, meditating on My suffering, examining your conscience, guarding your heart, and resolving to grow in virtue. He suggests evil thoughts to wear you down and scare you away from prayer and Scripture. He hates humble confession and would keep you from Communion if he could. Don’t listen to him. When he brings impure and evil thoughts, recognize that they are from him. Say to him: ‘Leave me, you unclean spirit. Be ashamed, you liar. You are disgusting for bringing such things to me. Go away, deceiver; you have no place in me. Jesus is with me like a mighty warrior, and you will be silenced. I would rather suffer anything, even death, than give in to you. Be quiet and leave. Even if you try more traps, I will not listen. The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? Even if an army surrounds me, my heart will not be afraid. The Lord is my strength and my Redeemer.’”

8. “Fight like a good soldier. And if you fall at times because of weakness, gather your strength again and trust in My greater grace. Be especially on guard against pride and empty confidence. Many have been led astray by pride and have fallen into deep darkness. Let their downfall be a warning to you—and a constant call to humility.”

   (1) Psalm 27:1–3; Psalm 19:14

Additional Bible References

- **James 4:7** – "Submit therefore to God. But resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
- **1 Peter 5:8–9** – "Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith."
- **2 Corinthians 12:9** – "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."
- **Proverbs 16:18** – "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling."

I Will Stand

[Verse 1]
When the enemy whispers doubt and shame
And I feel the heat of the inner flame
I will not run, I will not hide
The Lord is standing by my side

[Chorus]
I will stand, though the storm may rise
With the cross of Christ before my eyes
In my weakness, He is strong
I will trust and carry on

[Verse 2]
When temptations darken every door
And peace is hard to find once more
I'll cry to Jesus, my defense
His love will be my confidence

[Chorus]
I will stand, though the storm may rise
With the cross of Christ before my eyes
In my weakness, He is strong
I will trust and carry on

[Bridge]
Though the enemy plots with cunning schemes
I'll cling to truth, not fleeting dreams
My soul will sing, though battle's near
“My God is with me—I won't fear”

[Chorus]
I will stand, though the storm may rise
With the cross of Christ before my eyes
In my weakness, He is strong
I will trust and carry on

[Outro]
Yes, I will stand and I will fight
With God my shield and truth my light

Chapter 7: On Hiding Our Grace with Humble Restraint

1. “My child, it is better and safer for you to keep the grace of devotion hidden, not lifting yourself up with pride, or speaking of it too freely, or thinking too highly of it. Instead, despise yourself and view the grace as if it were given to someone unworthy. Don’t depend too much on how you feel, for that can change quickly. When you feel spiritually strong, remember how miserable and empty you are without grace. Growth in the spiritual life doesn’t lie only in receiving comfort, but in accepting its absence humbly, selflessly, and patiently. Even when comfort is withdrawn, keep praying, and don’t neglect your other responsibilities. In fact, do your work more eagerly—as if you’ve gained strength and wisdom—without abandoning yourself when your soul feels dry and troubled.

2. “Many people become impatient or lazy when things don’t go their way. But it’s not for a person to control his own spiritual path—only God gives grace and comfort, at the time and in the amount and to the person He chooses. Some people become overconfident when they receive spiritual comfort and try to do more than they are able. They don’t consider their own limitations, but follow emotion instead of sound judgment. Because they pushed beyond what pleased God, grace was taken away. They became poor and disgraced—though they had imagined themselves high in the heavens. In that humbling, they learned not to rely on their own wings, but to take refuge under Mine. Those who are new and inexperienced in the Lord’s ways can easily be misled if they don’t follow wise counsel.

3. “If they stubbornly cling to their own ideas rather than accepting the experience of others, they put themselves in danger. People who think they are wise usually struggle to let others guide them. It’s better to have a little wisdom with humility than great knowledge with pride. It’s better to lack what might make you proud. A person doesn’t act wisely when he throws himself entirely into joy, forgetting his past weakness and the holy fear of God that trembles at the thought of losing His grace. Nor is it wise to despair in adversity or to lose trust in Me when things are hard.

4. “Someone who is overconfident in peaceful times will be overwhelmed and afraid in times of battle. If you knew how to stay humble and steady, and how to rule your own spirit, you would not fall into trouble so quickly. When you feel spiritually passionate, it’s wise to think ahead to when that light may be taken away. And when it does fade, remember that it can return again. I withdraw it sometimes to teach you and to glorify Myself. Such a test is often more helpful than constant spiritual success.

5. “True merit is not measured by visions, consolations, Bible knowledge, or high position. It’s measured by deep humility, godly love, a pure and sincere desire to honor God, and an honest view of oneself. It means not thinking highly of yourself, but joyfully accepting rejection and humiliation from others, even more than praise.”

   (1) Jeremiah 10:23

Additional Bible References

- **James 4:6** – "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."
- **Proverbs 18:12** – "Before destruction the heart of a person is haughty, but humility goes before honor."
- **1 Peter 5:6** – "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you at the proper time."
- **Psalm 25:9** – "He leads the humble in justice, and He teaches the humble His way."
- **Isaiah 66:2** – "But I will look to this one: to one who is humble and contrite in spirit, and who trembles at My word."

Under the Shadow of His Wings

[Verse 1]
When the flame burns bright and my heart is stirred
And the voice of God in me is heard
Let me not boast or lift up my name
But bow in awe, and praise the same

[Chorus]
Let me hide beneath Your wings
Not in the thrill that feeling brings
Teach me to walk when light grows dim
To cling to You and not to whim

[Verse 2]
When the heavens close and the joy is gone
Still I will pray and carry on
Not chasing signs, nor fearing pain
But serving Christ, both loss and gain

[Chorus]
Let me hide beneath Your wings
Not in the thrill that feeling brings
Teach me to walk when light grows dim
To cling to You and not to whim

[Bridge]
In weakness You are all my grace
In silence still I seek Your face
You give and take—blessed be Your Name
Forever, Lord, You stay the same

[Chorus]
Let me hide beneath Your wings
Not in the thrill that feeling brings
Teach me to walk when light grows dim
To cling to You and not to whim

[Outro]
Yes, even when Your light withdraws
I'll praise the Giver, not the cause

Chapter 8: Of a Low Estimation of Self in the Sight of God

1. Though I am but dust and ashes, I will speak to my Lord. If I consider myself to be more than that, You will stand against me, and my sins will testify truthfully—I cannot argue with them. But if I humble myself, see myself as nothing, and reject all pride, grinding myself down to the dust that I am, Your grace will be kind to me, and Your light will shine in my heart. Any trace of self-esteem, no matter how small, will be swallowed up in the depths of my nothingness and disappear forever. There, You show me what I am, what I was, and where I've come to: I was so foolish and ignorant. (1) If I'm left to myself, I am nothing and full of weakness. But if You suddenly look on me, I am made strong and filled with joy. It's a great wonder that You lifted me up so quickly and so lovingly embraced me since I am always sinking by the weight of my own nature.

2. This is the work of Your love, which goes before me and helps me in so many needs. It guards me in great dangers and, I can truly say, rescues me from countless troubles. For by loving myself wrongly, I lost myself; but by seeking and sincerely loving You alone, I found both You and myself—and through love I was brought to an even more profound humility. For You, most gracious Lord, treat me beyond anything I could ever deserve, and far beyond all I could ever ask or imagine.

3. Blessed are You, O my God, because though I am unworthy of all Your blessings, Your generous and limitless goodness never stops doing good—even for the ungrateful and for those far from You. Turn our hearts back to You so that we may become thankful, humble, and godly—for You are our salvation, strength, and courage.

(1) Psalm 73:22.

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 103:14** – "For He Himself knows our form; He is mindful that we are nothing but dust."
- **1 Corinthians 1:28-29** – "God has chosen the lowly things of the world... so that no human may boast before God."
- **Isaiah 66:2** – "But I will look to this one: to one who is humble and contrite in spirit, and who trembles at My word."
- **2 Corinthians 12:9** – "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."
- **James 4:6** – "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

All That I Am Is Yours

[Verse 1]
I am but dust, and still You see
A soul You long to set free.
Though I fall, You lift me high,
Your mercy reaching from the sky.

[Chorus]
All that I am is Yours alone,
Not by strength, but grace You've shown.
When I forget I'm small indeed,
You remind me You're all I need.

[Verse 2]
When pride deceives and love grows cold,
You draw me back into the fold.
You whisper truth inside my heart,
And from myself, I must depart.

[Bridge]
You are my joy when I am low,
My refuge when the trials grow.
Though I deserve no good from Thee,
Still You pour out love on me.

[Chorus]
All that I am is Yours alone,
Not by strength, but grace You've shown.
When I forget I'm small indeed,
You remind me You're all I need.

[Outro]
So let me vanish into grace,
And find my life in Your embrace.

Chapter 9: That All Things Are to Be Referred to God, as the Final End

1. "My child, I must be your highest and final end if you truly want to be happy. For this purpose, your affections will be purified, for they are too often wrongly focused on yourself or on created things. If you seek yourself in anything, you will immediately fall short and become spiritually dry. Therefore, refer everything to Me first, for I am the one who gave you all things. View every blessing as flowing from the Supreme Good, and attribute all things to Me as their source."

2. "From Me both the humble and the great, the poor and the rich, draw water as from a living fountain. Those who serve Me freely and faithfully will receive grace upon grace. But anyone who glories in something apart from Me, or takes pride in any good found in themselves, will not have true joy, nor will their heart be enlarged, but rather they will be hindered and distressed. So you must not credit any good to yourself, nor view any virtue as coming from man, but give all the glory to God, for without Him man has nothing. I give all; I will reclaim all; and I require thankful giving with great seriousness."

3. "This is the truth, and by it all pride is cast down. If heavenly grace and true love enter your heart, there will be no room for envy, no constricted heart, and no selfish ambition. For divine love overcomes all and expands the soul's capacity. If you are truly wise, you will rejoice in Me alone and place your hope in Me alone. For there is none good but One—God,(1) who deserves all praise and in all things is to be glorified."

(1) Luke 18:19.

Additional Bible References

- **Romans 11:36** – "For from Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen."
- **James 1:17** – "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights..."
- **1 Corinthians 4:7** – "What do you have that you did not receive?"
- **Proverbs 3:6** – "In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."
- **Psalm 115:1** – "Not to us, Lord, not to us, but to Your name give glory, because of Your mercy, because of Your truth."

All to You Alone

[Verse 1]
All I have, I bring to You,
Every joy and trial too.
You're the source of all I own,
Nothing good comes from me alone.

[Chorus]
All to You alone belongs the praise,
Every breath, each night and day.
Not my strength, not my gain—
You alone must wear the crown and reign.

[Verse 2]
If I boast, let it be
In the grace You've poured on me.
Let no pride within me rise—
Only You deserve the highest prize.

[Bridge]
Let my heart be free of self,
Empty hands, no worldly wealth.
Fill me up with love divine,
Till all my joy and hope are Thine.

[Chorus]
All to You alone belongs the praise,
Every breath, each night and day.
Not my strength, not my gain—
You alone must wear the crown and reign.

[Outro]
All I am, and all I do,
Let it bring the world to You.

Chapter 10: That It Is Sweet to Despise the World and to Serve God

1. Now I will speak again, O Lord, and not remain silent. I will lift my voice to my God, my King who is exalted above all: *"Oh, how abundant is Your goodness, which You have stored up for those who fear You!"*(1) But what are You to those who love You? What are You to those who serve You with all their heart? Truly, the sweetness of contemplating You is beyond words—a gift You give to those who love You. This above all shows me the depth of Your love: that when I was nothing, You made me; and when I strayed far from You, You brought me back to serve You and commanded me to love You.

2. O Fountain of everlasting love, what can I say about You? How could I ever forget You, who remembered me even when I was wasting away and dying in sin? You have shown mercy beyond hope and kindness beyond merit. What can I possibly give You in return for Your grace? For not everyone is given the strength to renounce the world and take up a life wholly devoted to You. Is it really a great thing for me to serve You—You whom all creation is bound to serve? No, the greater wonder is that You would accept someone as lowly and unworthy as me, and allow me to be counted among Your chosen ones.

3. Behold, all that I have is Yours, and with it I serve You. And yet it is truly You who serve me, more than I serve You. Consider the heavens and the earth which You created for mankind—they obey Your will and serve humanity each day. But this is a small thing compared to the fact that You have even appointed angels to minister to us. Far greater still, You Yourself humbled Yourself to serve humanity, and even promised to give Your very self to us.

4. What can I offer in return for such immense mercies? Oh, that I could serve You every day of my life! Oh, that I could render You even one day's service that is truly worthy of You! For You alone are worthy of all service, all honor, and endless praise. Truly, You are my God, and I am Your poor servant, bound to serve You with all my strength, never growing weary of Your praise. This is my desire, my deep longing—and whatever I lack, please grant to me in Your mercy.

5. It is a high honor and joy to serve You and to despise the world for Your sake. Great grace will come to those who freely submit to Your holy service. Those who renounce carnal pleasures out of love for You will experience the sweet consolation of the Holy Spirit. Those who choose the narrow path of life for Your Name's sake and lay aside worldly concerns will be granted true freedom of spirit.

6. Oh, how precious and joyful is the service of God! By it, a person becomes truly free and holy. Oh, what a sacred calling is the life of one devoted to You—it makes a person equal to the angels, pleasing to You, terrifying to evil spirits, and beloved by the faithful. Oh, service to be embraced and continually desired, for in it the highest good is promised and everlasting joy is found!

(1) Psalm 31:19.

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 84:10** – "For a day in Your courtyards is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than live in the tents of wickedness."

- **Romans 12:1** – "Present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."

- **John 12:26** – "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also."

- **Philippians 3:8** – "I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."

- **Matthew 6:24** – "No one can serve two masters... You cannot serve God and wealth."

Sweeter Than the World

[Verse 1]
Oh Lord, You sought me when I strayed,
You called me back, You made a way.
You bid me serve with joy and love,
And draw my gaze to things above.

[Chorus]
Sweeter than the world You are,
Brighter than the morning star.
All I have I give to You,
My God, my joy, forever true.

[Verse 2]
You made the earth, the sky, the sea,
Yet stoop to walk and dwell with me.
Angels bow and stars obey,
Still You invite my soul to stay.

[Bridge]
To serve You, Lord, is perfect peace,
A holy joy that will not cease.
The world may call with fleeting praise,
But You alone deserve my days.

[Chorus]
Sweeter than the world You are,
Brighter than the morning star.
All I have I give to You,
My God, my joy, forever true.

[Outro]
Here I stand in love's pure light,
Serving You with all my might.

Chapter 11: That the Desires of the Heart Are to Be Examined and Governed

1. “My child, you still have many things to learn—things you haven’t yet understood well.”

2. What are they, Lord?

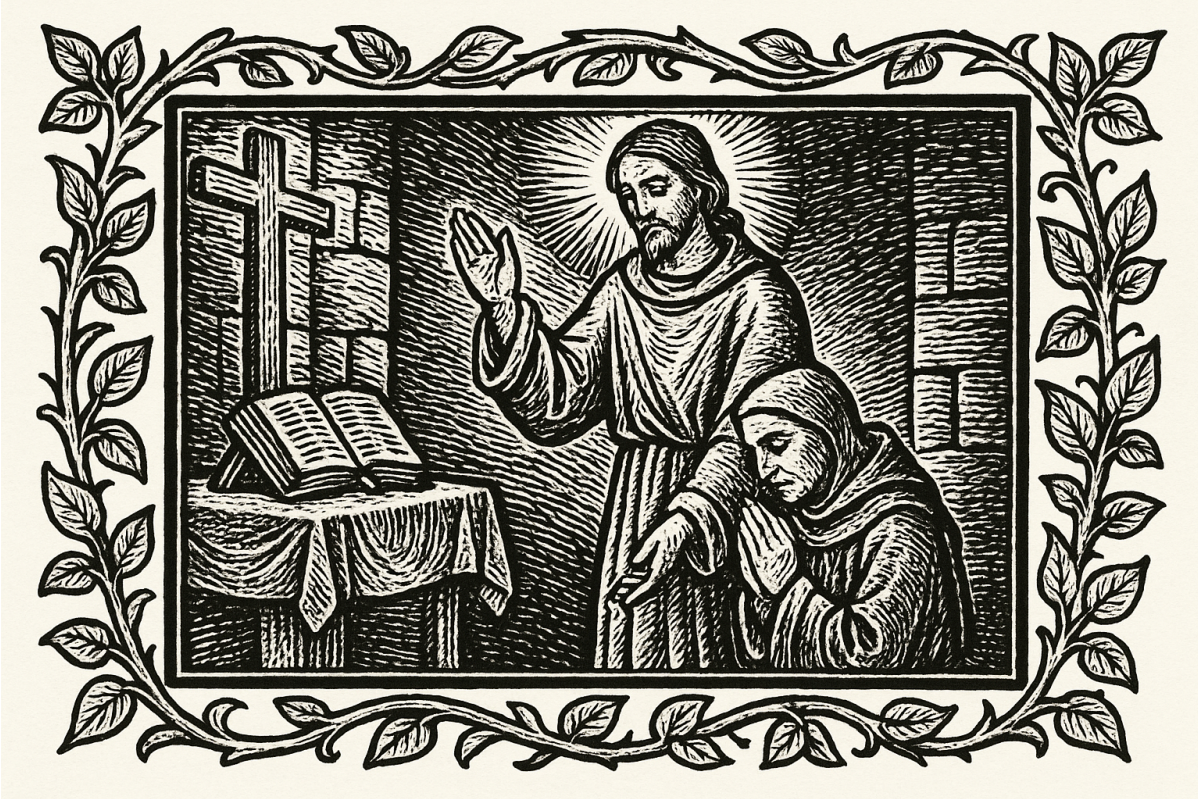
3. “To surrender your desires completely to My will, and to stop loving yourself above all, becoming instead a sincere seeker of My purposes. Your desires often stir you up and push you forward, but ask yourself honestly—are you being moved more by your own goals than by a longing for My glory? If you truly seek Me, you’ll be satisfied with whatever I choose for you. But if your own agenda is hidden in your heart, then that is what will drag you down and hinder your walk.”

4. “So be careful not to chase after a desire you've imagined, without first bringing it before Me in counsel. Otherwise, you may later regret it, and what once brought you excitement may now bring you sorrow. Not every feeling or ambition that seems good should be followed right away. And not every opposing thought must be immediately rejected. Sometimes even good desires need to be held in check—so that you don’t lose your focus, become a stumbling block to others, or fall into discouragement when your path meets resistance.”

5. “At times, yes, you must rise up with force and courage against your fleshly cravings. Don’t weigh decisions by what the flesh wants or resists. Instead, aim to bring your flesh into submission to your spirit. Keep it in check until it’s ready for anything—content with little, at peace with simplicity, and not grumbling in hardship.”

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 37:4** – “Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart.”
- **James 4:3** – “You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend what you request on your pleasures.”
- **Jeremiah 17:9** – “The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?”
- **Galatians 5:24** – “Now those who belong to Christ Jesus crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”
- **Proverbs 16:2** – “All the ways of a person are clean in his own sight, but the Lord examines the motives.”



Not My Will, But Yours

[Verse 1]
Teach me, Lord, to lay it down—
Every longing, every crown.
Strip away what blinds my sight,
Till I find in You my light.

[Chorus]
Not my will, but Yours be done,
All I seek is You alone.
Tame my heart when passions rise,
Guide my soul to what is wise.

[Verse 2]
Often I run on ahead,
Chasing dreams that You never said.
But when I wait, I hear You speak,
Your perfect will is all I seek.

[Bridge]
Shape my desires in Your hands,
Help me to trust, not understand.
Even when You lead through fire,
Burn away each false desire.

[Chorus]
Not my will, but Yours be done,
All I seek is You alone.
Tame my heart when passions rise,
Guide my soul to what is wise.

[Outro]
Not my will, but Yours, O Lord—
Let my heart in Yours be stored.

Chapter 12: On the Inward Growth of Patience, and the Struggle Against Evil Desires

1. Lord God, I realize how much I need patience, for so many things in this life don't go the way I plan. Even when I try to arrange my life for peace, conflict and hardship always seem to arise.

2. "You are right, My child. I don't want you to pursue a peace that avoids trials and knows no adversity. Instead, count it true peace when you remain steady through many troubles and are refined by trials. If you say, 'I can't handle much suffering,' how then will you endure the fire of judgment? Between two evils, always choose the lesser. So, if you want to avoid eternal torment later, learn to patiently endure present difficulties now, for My sake. Do you think people of the world go through life without suffering? You won't find that to be true—not even for the most successful."

3. "But you might say, 'They have plenty of pleasures and they get their way, so they don't feel their troubles as deeply.'"

4. "Let's say they do get what they want. But how long do you think that will last? They vanish like smoke. Even while they're still alive, their joy is mixed with bitterness, anxiety, and restlessness. In fact, the very pleasures they chase often turn on them and become the source of their sorrow. It's only right. They run after excessive pleasure, so they end up with confusion and regret. How short-lived, how deceptive, how twisted and destructive these worldly pleasures are! But people don't see it. Blinded and dulled by their desires, they live like animals—risking eternal death for a moment of comfort in this fading life. But you, My child, don't follow your cravings. Restrain your appetites.(1) Find your joy in Me, and I will give you the desires of your heart. (2)"

5. "If you truly want joy, and want to be filled with My comfort, then learn to despise the things of this world and reject empty pleasures. There, you will find blessing and deep satisfaction. The more you turn away from earthly comforts, the more powerfully you will experience My presence. But at first, this will not be easy. There will be sorrow and inner resistance. Old habits will fight back—but new, better ones can conquer them. Your flesh will complain, but it can be subdued by spiritual zeal. The devil will try to harass and tempt you, but he will flee when you pray. And useful work will block many of his attacks before they can even take hold."

Additional Bible References

- **Romans 5:3-4** – "We also celebrate in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope."

- **James 1:2-3** – "Consider it all joy, my brothers and sisters, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance."
- **Galatians 5:24** – "Now those who belong to Christ Jesus crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."
- **1 Peter 2:11** – "Beloved, I urge you…to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul."
- **Philippians 4:11-12** – "I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am."

Hold Me Through the Fire

[Verse 1]
When the weight is heavy, and my strength is small,
When every step feels harder, and shadows start to fall,
Still You say, “Endure it,” still You call me near—
So I will walk with patience, not trembling with fear.

[Chorus]
Hold me through the fire, teach my soul to stand,
Strip away desire not born from Your hand.
If I must suffer, then let it refine—
My will laid down, exchanged for Thine.

[Verse 2]
Pleasures of the world are fleeting and dim,
They promise sweet comfort, but they don’t lead to Him.
But in Your refining, I’m finally free,
The pain becomes purpose, when it draws me to Thee.

[Bridge]
I will not chase the winds of gain,
Nor hide my heart from holy pain.
Let every trial carve deeper grace,
Until I behold Your radiant face.

[Chorus]
Hold me through the fire, teach my soul to stand,
Strip away desire not born from Your hand.
If I must suffer, then let it refine—
My will laid down, exchanged for Thine.

[Outro]
You are my comfort, my treasure, my peace—
And in Your will, my striving will cease.

Chapter 13: On Obedience and Humble Submission, Following the Example of Jesus Christ

1. "My child, whoever tries to escape obedience also distances himself from My grace. And the one who seeks his own private advantage loses the blessings that are shared by all. If you won't freely and willingly submit to those in authority over you, it shows that your flesh is not yet fully under control. It still resists and complains. If you want to learn to master your own desires, start by submitting to the one appointed over you. The external enemy is easily defeated when the inner self is truly humble. But if the Spirit does not rule you, then your greatest enemy is yourself. Unless you learn to hold your selfish desires in contempt, you won't be able to conquer them. Your reluctance to surrender to others shows how much you still love yourself."

2. "But honestly, what's the big deal if you, who are dust and nothing, submit to another person for My sake—when I, the Almighty Creator of all things, submitted Myself to mankind for yours? I became the lowest and most despised of men, so you could defeat pride through My example of humility. Learn to obey, you who are made of dust! Learn to humble yourself, you who are made of earth and clay. Bow low before others. Crush your pride. Surrender yourself completely to serve others."

3. "Fight against your ego. Don't let pride live in you. Be so humble, so self-forgetful that anyone may walk over you as they would dirt on the road. What do you have to complain about, foolish person? What defense can you offer, sinner, when others criticize you—especially since you have so often offended Me and deserve judgment? But My eyes have shown you mercy because your soul is precious to Me. I spared you so that you would recognize My love, give thanks for My kindness, and offer yourself fully to a life of true humility—bearing the scorn you actually deserve."

Additional Bible References

- **Philippians 2:5-8** – "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus… He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, death on a cross."
- **Romans 8:13** – "For if you are living according to the flesh, you are going to die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live."
- **James 4:6** – "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."
- **1 Peter 5:5-6** – "Clothe yourselves with humility… so that He may exalt you at the proper time."
- **Matthew 11:29** – "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart."

Beneath the Feet of Grace

[Verse 1]
I tried to climb the mountain high,
To claim the crown, to touch the sky.
But in my striving, pride took hold—
And love grew faint, and grace grew cold.

[Chorus]
So teach me to be lowly, teach me to be small,
To kneel before Your mercy, and give to You my all.
Not mine to seek the glory, nor mine to take the throne—
But gladly I'll be humbled, where Jesus walked alone.

[Verse 2]
You wore the crown of thorns for me,
You stooped to serve, to set me free.
The King became the servant true,
So now I bow and follow You.

[Bridge]
Let me be walked on, if that brings You praise,
Let me be scorned, if Your truth is raised.
I'll count it all joy if I'm found in Your will,
In the dust of surrender, my soul shall be still.

[Chorus]
So teach me to be lowly, teach me to be small,
To kneel before Your mercy, and give to You my all.
Not mine to seek the glory, nor mine to take the throne—
But gladly I'll be humbled, where Jesus walked alone.

[Outro]
Let me be known for loving Your name,
Not for my honor, nor worldly acclaim.
Beneath the feet of grace I'll stay,
Till pride and self are washed away.

Chapter 14: On Meditating upon the Hidden Judgments of God, So That We May Not Be Prideful in Our Good Works

1. You send forth Your judgments against me, O Lord, and shake all my bones with fear and trembling—my soul trembles exceedingly. I stand in awe, remembering that even the heavens are not pure in Your sight. (1) If You charge Your angels with error and did not spare them, what hope have I? Stars have fallen from the heavens—how can I, who am but dust, dare to stand? Those whose deeds once seemed praiseworthy fell into ruin; I have seen those who once fed on the bread of angels turn instead to the husks that swine devour.

2. Therefore, there is no holiness unless You, O Lord, sustain it with Your hand. Wisdom is useless unless You guide the helm. Strength cannot stand unless You preserve it. Purity is not secure unless You protect it. Self-control fails without Your watchful care. When we are left alone, we are swallowed up and perish; but when You visit us, we are raised and made alive. Truly, we are unstable—but by You we are made strong. We grow cold—but by You we are rekindled.

3. Oh, how lowly and humble I must think of myself! I must consider myself as nothing—if I appear to possess anything good, it is only by Your grace. How deeply I ought to submit to Your incomprehensible judgments, Lord, when I find that I am nothing, nothing, and still nothing. What a crushing weight, what an unpassable sea, in which I find no substance of my own—nothing at all! Where, then, is any room for boasting? Where is the confidence that comes from virtue? All pride is drowned in the depths of Your judgments.

4. What is all flesh before You? *Shall the clay exalt itself against the One who formed it?*(2) How can anyone boast with proud words if his heart is truly surrendered to God? The whole world cannot exalt the one whom Truth has humbled. And the words of praise from others cannot move him who places his hope entirely in You. Even those who speak praise are nothing themselves, and their words will pass away. But *the truth of the Lord endures forever.* (3)

(1) Job 15:15 (2) Isaiah 29:16 (3) Psalm 112:2

Additional Bible References

- **1 Corinthians 10:12** – "Therefore let the one who thinks he stands watch out that he does not fall."
- **Romans 12:3** – "...not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment."
- **James 4:6** – "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

- **Proverbs 16:18** – "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling."

- **Job 5:17** – "Behold, happy is the person whom God disciplines, so do not reject the discipline of the Almighty."

The Depths of Your Judgment

[Verse 1]
Your judgments fall like thunder,
They shake my soul with dread.
The stars that once shone brighter
Lie fallen, cold and dead.
If angels You accuse, Lord,
What claim have I to stand?
But still You lift the humbled
With Your sustaining hand.

[Chorus]
Oh, I am nothing—yet You call me near.
The weight of glory crushes pride and fear.
No good I have apart from You alone—
In You I live, in You I'm known.

[Verse 2]
The saints have tasted heaven,
Then fed the swine with shame.
And I, too weak for merit,
Still tremble at Your name.
Yet in Your love I'm anchored,
Though tossed by doubt and sin,
For You ignite the cold heart,
And light new fire within.

[Bridge]
Let not the clay exalt itself,
Nor dust pretend to shine.
Let me be small, forgotten all,
So I can be fully Thine.

[Chorus]
Oh, I am nothing—yet You call me near.
The weight of glory crushes pride and fear.
No good I have apart from You alone—
In You I live, in You I'm known.

[Outro]
The truth of God shall never fade away,
Though flesh and fame and fleeting praise decay.
To You be glory, now and evermore—
My Judge, my Hope, whom I adore.

Chapter 15: How We Must Stand and Speak in Everything We Desire

1. "My child, in every matter, speak like this: 'Lord, if it pleases You, let this come to pass. Lord, if this will bring You honor, let it be done in Your Name. Lord, if You see that this is good for me and will benefit my soul, grant me the grace to use it for Your glory. But if You know it will harm me or not help my soul, take the desire away from me!' For not every desire comes from the Holy Spirit, even if it seems right and good to a person. It's hard to judge with certainty whether a good or evil spirit is prompting your desires, or whether they are simply from your own heart. Many have been deceived in the end, who at first thought they were led by a good spirit.

2. "So, whatever you feel strongly drawn to, you must seek it with the fear of God and a humble heart. Above all, fully surrender yourself and entrust everything to Me, saying, 'Lord, You know what is best. Let this or that happen as You will. Give what You will, how much You will, and when You will. Do with me what You know is best and what most pleases You and brings You glory. Put me wherever You will, and work freely in me as You please. I am in Your hands—shape me according to Your purpose. I am Your servant, ready for whatever comes. I do not want to live for myself but for You. Oh, may I live a life that is truly worthy and complete in Your sight.'"

A Prayer to Be Enabled to Do God's Will Perfectly

3. Grant me Your grace, most merciful Jesus, that it may remain with me, work within me, and continue with me to the end. Help me always to desire and long for whatever is most pleasing and precious to You. Let Your will be mine, and may my will always follow Yours and be fully aligned with it. May I choose and reject only what You choose and reject; yes, let it be impossible for me to desire anything apart from Your will.

4. Grant that I may die to all worldly things and, for Your sake, love to be despised and unknown in this world. Above all that I can desire, grant me to find rest in You, and may my heart be at peace in You alone. You are the true peace of the heart, You alone are its rest. Apart from You, everything is difficult and restless. In You alone, O supreme and eternal God, *I will lie down in peace and sleep, for You alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.*(1) Amen.

Additional Bible References

- **Proverbs 16:9** – "The mind of a person plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps."
- **Matthew 6:10** – "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

- **Psalm 143:10** – "Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; let Your good Spirit lead me on level ground."
- **James 4:15** – "Instead, you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.'"
- **Romans 12:2** – "...that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

Your Will, Not Mine

[Verse 1]
If it pleases You, Lord, let it be—
But only if it brings You glory.
If it harms the soul within,
Take the longing, cleanse the sin.
All my hopes I lay down low,
Guide me where You will me go.

[Chorus]
Your will, not mine—be done in me.
Though I am blind, in You I see.
Shape this heart to match Your own,
I am Yours and Yours alone.

[Verse 2]
If You call me to the flame,
Let me praise Your holy name.
If You bless me with delay,
Let me trust and still obey.
All I ask is this one thing—
Let my life Your praises sing.

[Bridge]
Take my dreams, refine them true,
Let them live or die in You.
Make me still when I would run,
Till Your perfect work is done.

[Chorus]
Your will, not mine—be done in me.
Though I am blind, in You I see.
Shape this heart to match Your own,
I am Yours and Yours alone.

[Outro]
In Your rest I lay me down,
Safe within Your mercy's crown.
All I am and all I'll be,
Finds its joy and peace in Thee.

Chapter 16: That True Comfort Is to Be Sought in God Alone

1. Whatever I can desire or imagine for comfort, I do not look for it here, but in the life to come. Even if I had every comfort this world offers and could enjoy all its pleasures, they would not last long. Therefore, O my soul, you will only be fully comforted and truly refreshed in God alone—the Comforter of the poor and the One who lifts up the humble. Wait a little longer, my soul, wait for the fulfillment of God's promise, and you will receive the abundance of every good thing in heaven. If you crave earthly things too much, you will lose the eternal and heavenly ones. Use temporal things as needed, but desire only what is eternal. You cannot be satisfied with anything that is temporary, because you were not made for it.

2. Even if you had all the created things ever made, they could not make you truly happy or blessed. Your happiness and blessedness are found in God, who made all things—not the happiness imagined by the foolish lovers of the world, but the joy that Christ's faithful servants wait for, and that the spiritually minded and pure in heart sometimes taste, whose true home is in heaven. (1) All human comfort is shallow and fleeting; only that comfort is blessed and true which springs from the truth and is felt inwardly. The godly person always carries their Comforter with them—Jesus—and says: "Be with me, Lord Jesus, always and everywhere. Let it be my joy to give up all human comforts willingly. And if Your consolation is withdrawn, let Your will and approval still be with me, for that is my greatest comfort. *For You will not always strive with us, nor will You keep Your anger forever.*"(2)

Additional Bible References

- **2 Corinthians 1:3–4** – "Blessed be the God... the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction."
- **Isaiah 49:13** – "For the Lord has comforted His people and will have compassion on His afflicted."
- **Revelation 21:4** – "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes... the first things have passed away."
- **Psalm 94:19** – "When my anxious thoughts multiply within me, Your comfort delights my soul."
- **Romans 15:13** – "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing."

My Comfort Is in You

[Verse 1]
I sought for peace in passing things,
The gold, the praise, the song man sings.
But nothing held or satisfied,
Each dream dissolved, each promise died.

[Chorus]
My comfort is in You alone,
O Lord, my Rock, my Cornerstone.
When every earthly joy is gone,
I rest in You, and You alone.

[Verse 2]
The fleeting gifts the world bestows
Are here today, tomorrow goes.
But in Your Word, I find my rest,
Your love alone makes rich and blessed.

[Bridge]
Be with me, Lord, through joy or pain,
Through barren drought or heavy rain.
If I have You, I have enough—
Your will is kind, Your comfort tough.

[Chorus]
My comfort is in You alone,
O Lord, my Rock, my Cornerstone.
When every earthly joy is gone,
I rest in You, and You alone.

[Outro]
So let me trade what cannot stay
For treasures that won't pass away.
And when I see Your face above,
I'll thank You for Your perfect love.

Chapter 17: That All Care Is to Be Cast Upon God

1. “My child, let Me do with you as I will; I know what is best for you. You think like a human being, and in many things, you judge according to natural feelings and emotions.”

2. Lord, what You say is true. Your care for me is greater than anything I could provide for myself. The one who does not cast all his care on You stands on unstable ground. Lord, as long as my will remains fixed and aligned with Yours, do with me whatever You want—for whatever You choose for me will always be good. Blessed be Your Name if You leave me in darkness; blessed be Your Name if You surround me with light. Blessed if You bring comfort; and still blessed if You bring distress.

3. “My child, this is the kind of surrender you must have if you truly want to walk with Me. You must be ready to accept both suffering and joy. You must be as willing to be poor and needy as to be full and rich.”

4. Lord, I will gladly bear whatever You want to send my way. I will not choose for myself, but will receive both good and evil, sweet and bitter, joy and sorrow—all from Your hand—with gratitude. Only keep me from sin, and I will not fear death or hell. Just do not cast me away forever, nor erase my name from the Book of Life. Then no trial that comes upon me can truly harm me.

Additional Bible References

- **1 Peter 5:7** – “Casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares about you.”
- **Psalm 55:22** – “Cast your burden upon the Lord and He will sustain you.”
- **Romans 8:28** – “God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God.”
- **Job 1:21** – “The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.”
- **Philippians 4:6–7** – “Do not be anxious about anything... and the peace of God... will guard your hearts and minds.”

Whatever May Come

[Verse 1]
Whatever may come, O Lord, I am Yours,
In valley or shadow, when suffering pours.
If silence surrounds me or comforts abound,
Still I will praise You—on solid ground.

[Chorus]
I cast every care on You, my King,
You know what every season will bring.
In darkness or light, in sorrow or song,
To You, my Shepherd, I still belong.

[Verse 2]
I will not choose what lies ahead,
But trust Your hand in tears I've shed.
The bitter and sweet, I take as one,
For all is good in the work You've begun.

[Bridge]
Write not my name in dust and wind,
But in the Book that knows no end.
If I have You, I fear no loss—
My hope is anchored at the cross.

[Chorus]
I cast every care on You, my King,
You know what every season will bring.
In darkness or light, in sorrow or song,
With You, my Shepherd, I still belong.

[Outro]
So blessed be Your Name, come what may,
I'll trust Your will and walk Your way.
No trial or pain can steal my song—
I am Yours, and You are strong.

Chapter 18: That Temporal Miseries Are to Be Borne Patiently After the Example of Christ

1. "My child, I came down from heaven for your salvation. I took on your miseries—not out of necessity, but out of love—so that you might learn patience and bear the hardships of this life without complaining. From the moment of My birth until My death on the cross, I never ceased to suffer. I endured lack of earthly comforts, I was often spoken against, I bore contradiction and harsh words with gentleness, and I received ingratitude for My kindness, blasphemy in return for My miracles, and rebuke for My teaching."

2. Lord, because You were patient in life—especially in fulfilling the will of Your Father—it is right that I, a miserable sinner, should also bear all things with patience according to Your will. As long as You choose, I will carry the burden of this corruptible life for my salvation. Though this present life feels heavy, it becomes rich with meaning because of Your grace. For those who are weak, it becomes easier and more joyful through Your example and the footsteps of the saints. Even more so than in former times, this life is now filled with hope and consolation. For under the old covenant, the gates of heaven were closed and the way seemed hidden—few even longed for the eternal kingdom. And even those who were righteous under the law could not enter heaven before Your passion and the redemption won by Your death.

3. Oh, what great thanks I owe You! You have graciously shown both me and all the faithful the good and right path to Your everlasting kingdom. Your path is our path, and through holy endurance, we follow You—our Crown. If You had not gone before us, who would be willing to follow? How easily would we turn back if we did not have Your shining example before us! And yet, even now, though we have heard Your many works and words, we remain lukewarm. What would become of us if we did not have such a light to lead us?

Additional Bible References

- **Hebrews 12:2–3** – "Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the originator and perfecter of the faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross... so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."

- **1 Peter 2:21** – "For you have been called for this purpose, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you would follow in His steps."

- **Romans 8:18** – "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that is to be revealed to us."

- **Isaiah 53:3** – "He was despised and abandoned by men, a Man of great pain and familiar with sickness..."

- **John 16:33** – "In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

You Went Before

[Verse 1]
You came from heaven, walked our dust,
You bore the weight, so full of trust.
From manger low to cross so high,
You taught us how to live and die.

[Chorus]
You went before, You cleared the way,
In every trial, You chose to stay.
So when I suffer, I won't despair—
You went before, and You are there.

[Verse 2]
No comfort wrapped Your earthly years,
Just scorn and grief and bitter tears.
Yet not a word of hate You spoke,
Beneath the lash, beneath the yoke.

[Bridge]
What grace is this, to lead the weak,
To teach us all through wounds so deep?
If You had not endured with love,
We'd never reach the throne above.

[Chorus]
You went before, You cleared the way,
In every trial, You chose to stay.
So when I suffer, I won't despair—
You went before, and You are there.

[Outro]
And though I falter, faint, or fall,
I'll rise again and heed Your call.
You are my Light, my Crown, my Song—
You went before, for You I long.

Chapter 19: Of Bearing Injuries, and Who Shall Be Approved as Truly Patient

1. “What are you saying, My child? Stop complaining, and consider My suffering and the suffering of My saints. You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood. (1) What you suffer is little compared to those who have endured so much—those who were severely tempted, grievously troubled, and tested in many ways. You ought, therefore, to remember their heavier burdens, so that you may bear your lighter ones more easily. And if they do not seem light to you, see whether your impatience is the real cause. But whether they are small or great, train yourself to endure them all with patience.

2. “As much as you commit yourself to bearing hardship patiently, you act wisely and gain more spiritual merit. You will also bear things more easily if your mind and your habits are trained for it. Do not say, ‘I cannot endure this from that person; such things should not be done to me. He has done me great harm and accused me of something I never even thought of! But from someone else, I would bear it patiently, especially if I see it’s something I should suffer.’ That kind of thinking is foolish. It does not seek true patience, nor does it care about who rewards such patience. Instead, it weighs the person and the offense against self-interest.

3. “He is not truly patient who is only willing to suffer as far as he thinks right and from whom he chooses. True patience does not ask who the trial comes from—whether it’s someone superior, equal, or beneath him; whether it's from a good and holy person or a perverse and undeserving one. The truly patient person accepts all adversity without distinction, however often it comes or from whomever it comes. He receives it gratefully as from the hand of God, and counts it as great gain. For with God, nothing suffered for His sake—however small—goes without reward.

4. “Be ready for battle if you want the victory. Without struggle, you cannot win the crown of patience. If you refuse to suffer, you refuse to be crowned. But if you desire the crown, then fight courageously and endure patiently. You won’t reach rest without labor, nor gain victory without a fight.”

5. Lord, make possible through grace what seems impossible to me by nature. You know how little I am able to bear and how quickly I fall when adversity arises. Whatever trial or sorrow You allow to come my way, let it be pleasing and acceptable to me. For to suffer and be troubled for Your sake is greatly beneficial to my soul.

(1) Hebrews 12:4.

Additional Bible References

- **1 Peter 2:20** – “But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.”

- **Romans 5:3–4** – "We also celebrate in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character."
- **James 1:2–4** – "Consider it all joy, my brothers and sisters, when you encounter various trials..."
- **Matthew 5:11–12** – "Blessed are you when people insult you... Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great."
- **Proverbs 19:11** – "A person's discretion makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense."

Let Me Bear It for You

[Verse 1]
When words are sharp and hearts are cold,
And I am bruised by lies they've told,
Let me recall the path You took,
With patient love and quiet look.

[Chorus]
Let me bear it for You, Lord,
All the scorn I can't afford.
When my soul is worn and sore,
Make me love, and bear it more.

[Verse 2]
I want to choose the gentle way,
To kneel and bless, not to repay.
For You endured the bitter scorn,
That I might wear a victor’s crown.

[Bridge]
Help me see each trial as gain,
Every loss refined through pain.
Not by strength, but by Your grace,
I will stand and run this race.

[Chorus]
Let me bear it for You, Lord,
All the scorn I can't afford.
When my soul is worn and sore,
Make me love, and bear it more.

[Outro]
Let me count it joy to fall,
For You, my Savior, bore it all.
If I’m struck, or torn in two—
I will bear it all for You.

Chapter 20: On Confessing Our Weakness and the Miseries of This Life

1. I will confess my sin to You, Lord; I will acknowledge my weakness. It's often something very small that weighs me down and discourages me. I determine to be courageous, but then a minor temptation arises, and I feel overwhelmed. A small thing may bring about a great trial, and when I feel briefly secure, I'm suddenly knocked down by something as small as a passing breeze.

2. So, Lord, see my humility and frailty—they are fully known to You. Be merciful to me, and lift me out of the mud so I don't sink deeper, lest I remain in despair. What often causes me shame before You is that I am so prone to falling and so weak in resisting temptation. Though I don't willfully give in, the temptation itself is powerful and relentless, and it drains me just to live with this ongoing battle. My weakness is revealed by how easily sinful thoughts rush in and how slowly they depart.

3. O mighty God of Israel, You who love every faithful soul—look upon the toil and sorrow of Your servant, and strengthen me in all that I strive to do. Fortify me with heavenly courage, lest the old self—the corrupt flesh—not yet fully surrendered to the Spirit, begins to dominate. I must battle it as long as I live in this weary, broken world. What a life this is, full of tribulations and hardship, with snares and enemies at every turn. When one trial passes, another begins—often before the first is over.

4. How can anyone love such a life, with its constant bitterness, affliction, and sorrow? Can we even call it "life," when it brings so many deaths and destructions? The world is rightly condemned as deceitful and vain, yet it's still clung to so tightly because fleshly desires have such a strong grip. There are things in the world that draw us to love, and others that stir up hatred. The desires of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life tempt us toward the world—but the resulting pain and judgment make us despise it and long for freedom.

5. But, oh! The heart tied to this world is often ruled by sinful desire and thinks it is happiness to lie among thorns, because it has no taste for the sweetness of God or the beauty of virtue. Those who truly reject the world and seek to live for God with discipline are not ignorant of the divine joy that's promised to those who deny themselves. They clearly see how deeply the world is deceived and how far it leads people astray.

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 103:14** – "For He Himself knows our form; He is mindful that we are nothing but dust."
- **Romans 7:18** – "For I know that good does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh..."
- **1 John 2:16** – "For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life—is not from the Father, but is from the world."

- **2 Corinthians 12:9** – "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."
- **Hebrews 4:15** – "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses..."

When I Am Weak

[Verse 1]
I thought I stood on solid ground,
Resolved to rise, not fall again.
But winds of trial came rushing in—
A breath, a whisper, brought me down.

[Chorus]
But You, O Lord, are strong when I am weak,
You lift me up when I can barely speak.
Though I fall, I will not stay,
Your mercy meets me in the fray.
When I am weak—then You are strong.

[Verse 2]
My soul is tired from endless fight,
Temptation knocks both day and night.
I long for peace, but still I see
The war within won't set me free.

[Chorus]
But You, O Lord, are strong when I am weak,
You lift me up when I can barely speak.
Though I fall, I will not stay,
Your mercy meets me in the fray.
When I am weak—then You are strong.

[Bridge]
I taste the joy the world can't give,
I choose in You alone to live.
Though battles rage and thorns remain,
Your grace sustains me through the pain.

[Chorus]
Yes, You, O Lord, are strong when I am weak,
You lift me up when I can barely speak.
Though I fall, I will not stay,
Your mercy meets me in the fray.
When I am weak—then You are strong.

[Outro]
When I am weak—then You are strong.

Chapter 21: That We Must Rest in God Above All Goods and Gifts

1. Above everything and in all circumstances, you must always rest in the Lord, O my soul, for He alone is the eternal rest of the saints. Grant me, most sweet and loving Jesus, to rest in You above every created thing—above health and beauty, above fame and honor, above power and rank, above knowledge and skill, above wealth and achievement, above all joy and celebration, above all recognition and praise, above all sweetness and comfort, above all hope and promises, above all merit and desire, above all gifts and rewards You can give, above all joy and gladness that the heart can feel—in short, above all angels and archangels and the entire host of heaven, above all visible and invisible things, and above everything that is not You, my God.

2. For You, O Lord my God, are better than all things. You alone are the Most High, You alone are almighty, completely sufficient, and the fulfillment of all good. You alone are perfectly delightful and comforting, altogether lovely and loving. You alone are the most exalted and glorious above everything, in whom all things exist, have existed, and forever will exist. Therefore, everything You give me without Yourself is not enough—nor is anything You reveal or promise about Yourself satisfying unless I see and fully possess You. My heart cannot truly rest or be at peace until it rests in You, going beyond all gifts and created things.

3. O most beloved Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, most holy lover of my soul, Lord of all creation—who will give me wings of true freedom so I may fly to You and find rest? When will it happen that I am open to fully receiving You and knowing how sweet You are, O Lord my God? When will I entirely forget myself for Your sake and know only You—above all feeling and understanding, in a way that others cannot grasp? Now, I often sigh in sorrow and carry the burden of this earthly life with pain, for many evils trouble and distract me. They cloud my soul and tangle my thoughts so I can't come freely to You or enjoy the deep communion always available to the blessed spirits. Let my heavy sighs rise to You, and look on my loneliness on this earth.

4. O Jesus, Light of Eternal Glory, Comfort of the wandering soul, before You my mouth is silent and my quietness speaks to You. How long will You delay, my Lord, before You come to me? Let Your coming gladden the heart of Your humble servant. Stretch out Your hand and rescue me from every trap. Come, O Lord—come, for without You there is no joy in my day or hour. You are my joy, and without You, my table is empty. I am miserable, like one imprisoned and chained, until You shine upon me with the light of Your presence and give me freedom with the radiance of Your love.

5. Let others desire whatever they will besides You—let it be as they choose—but as for me, nothing pleases or ever will please me except You, my God, my hope, my eternal salvation. I will not be silent or cease praying until Your grace returns and You speak to me within.

6. “Look, here I am! See, I come to you, because you called Me. Your tears, the longing of your soul, your humility and broken spirit—these drew Me to you and brought Me here.”

7. And I said, Lord, I called out to You and longed to enjoy You, even choosing to give up everything for Your sake. You were the one who first stirred my heart to seek You. Blessed be Your name, Lord, for You have worked this good desire in Your servant, according to Your great mercy. What can I say before You now, except to humble myself completely and always remember my sin and unworthiness? There is no one like You among the wonders of heaven and earth. Your works are marvelous, Your judgments are true, and Your providence rules everything. Therefore, to You be praise and glory—O Wisdom of the Father. Let my mouth, soul, and all creation together praise and bless You.

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 62:1** – "My soul waits in silence for God alone; from Him comes my salvation."
- **Matthew 11:28** – "Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
- **Psalm 16:11** – "In Your presence is fullness of joy; in Your right hand there are pleasures forever."
- **Colossians 3:2** – "Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth."
- **Isaiah 26:3** – "The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in You."

Jesus, My Only Rest

[Verse 1]
Above all beauty, power, and fame,
Above all gifts this world can name,
My soul shall rest in You alone,
O Christ, my joy, my cornerstone.

[Chorus]
You are my rest, my peace, my song,
In You alone do I belong.
No gift or praise can satisfy—
Just let me see You, Lord Most High.

[Verse 2]
When light grows dim and hope feels small,
Your presence still outshines it all.
I seek no glory, seek no throne,
Just to be Yours, and Yours alone.

[Bridge]
Oh give me wings to rise and flee
The chains that bind, the snares I see.
Come near, O Lord, and speak again,
My heart is waiting, say "Amen."

[Chorus]
You are my rest, my peace, my song,
In You alone do I belong.
No gift or praise can satisfy—
Just let me see You, Lord Most High.

[Outro]
So let all voices praise Your name,
And I'll be still, no more ashamed.
You found me, called me, brought me near,
In You alone I lose all fear.

Chapter 22: That We Must Reflect on God's Many Blessings

1. Lord, open my heart to Your Word, and teach me to walk in the path of Your commandments. Help me to understand Your will and to remember Your blessings—both general and specific—with deep reverence and thoughtful reflection, so that I might give You worthy thanks. Yet I know and admit that I cannot give You due praise for even the smallest of Your mercies. I am less than the least of all the good things You have given me, and when I consider Your majesty, my spirit fails under the weight of it.

2. Everything we have—body and soul, outward or inward, natural or supernatural—is a gift from You, proving that You are good, generous, and kind. Though one person may receive more and another less, all things come from You, and without You, not even the smallest thing could be ours. Whoever has received more must not boast or think himself better than others, nor look down on those with less; rather, the one who claims the least credit and gives the most humble thanks is truly the greater. And the one who considers himself lower than everyone else and most unworthy is the one best prepared to receive greater things.

3. But the one who has received fewer gifts shouldn't be discouraged or take offense, nor should he envy the one who has more. Instead, he should look to You and praise Your goodness, because You give so freely and generously without favoritism. Everything comes from You, and in all things You should be praised. You know what is best to give to each person. Why one has less and another more is for You alone to know, for You fully understand what each person deserves.

4. So, Lord, I see it as a blessing not to have many things that might make me appear important or praiseworthy in the eyes of others. In fact, the person who truly understands his own poverty and insignificance shouldn't feel sorrow or discouragement, but rather joy and comfort. For You, Lord, have chosen the poor and the humble—those with little in this world—to be Your friends and companions. All the apostles testify to this truth. You made them rulers over the earth, yet they lived humble, honest, blameless lives. They even rejoiced to suffer shame for Your Name, and what the world despises, they embraced with joy.

5. Therefore, nothing should bring more joy to those who love You and remember Your blessings than to do Your will and rest in the good pleasure of Your eternal purpose. That should bring more comfort than any gift or honor. A true servant of God will be just as happy to be the least as another is to be the greatest; just as content in a lowly position as in a place of prominence; just as willing to be overlooked and unnoticed as to be praised and admired. Doing Your will and bringing You glory should matter more than any personal gain or favor.

   Acts 5:41

Additional Bible References

- **1 Corinthians 4:7** – "What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?"
- **James 1:17** – "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights…"
- **Romans 12:3** – "I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think so as to have sound judgment…"
- **Luke 1:52-53** – "He has brought down rulers from their thrones, and has exalted those who were humble. He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty."
- **Philippians 4:11** – "I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am."

Only What You Give

[Verse 1]
Every breath I breathe, every step I take
Every sunrise painting light across the lake
It's all from You, the Giver of all grace
How could I ever take Your gifts and not give thanks?

[Chorus]
It's only what You give, not what I've earned
I don't deserve the love I've learned
So let me praise You, not just for what I see
But for Your will at work in shaping me

[Verse 2]
When others rise and I remain unseen
Still I'll rejoice in all Your gifts to me
For You alone decide what each should hold
And humble hearts are worth more than gold

[Bridge]
Though I may be the least of these
Your mercy lifts and sets me free
To find my joy in serving low
And let Your will be all I know

[Chorus]
It's only what You give, not what I've earned
I don't deserve the love I've learned
So let me praise You, not just for what I see
But for Your will at work in shaping me

[Outro]
Yes, all I am is what You chose to bless
So I will rest in Your faithfulness

Chapter 23: On Four Practices That Lead to Great Peace

1. "My child, I will now teach you the way to peace and true freedom."

2. Do as You say, Lord, for it brings joy to my soul to hear it.

3. "Strive, My child, to do the will of others rather than your own. Choose to have less, not more. Always seek the lowest place and be willing to submit to all. Always desire and pray that God's will be done in your life. The person who lives this way enters into the peace and stillness of God's inheritance."

4. Lord, this short teaching of Yours is full of deep wisdom. Though simple in words, it is rich in meaning and produces much fruit. If I could live it fully, nothing would disturb my heart. But whenever I feel anxious or troubled, I realize I have strayed from this instruction. Yet You, Lord, are Almighty and always eager for my soul to grow—so grant more grace that I may follow Your teaching and live out my salvation.

A Prayer Against Evil Thoughts

5. O Lord my God, don't stay far from me. Hurry to help me, my God (Psalm 71:12), for many thoughts and deep fears have risen up against me, troubling my soul. How can I pass through them unharmed? How will I break free?

6. "I will go before you," says the Lord, "and make the crooked places straight" (Isaiah 45:2). I will open the prison doors and show you hidden things.

7. Do as You have promised, Lord, and drive away every evil thought by Your presence. This is my hope and my only comfort: to run to You in every hardship, to trust You, to cry out from my heart, and to wait patiently for Your loving help.

A Prayer for Illumination of the Mind

8. Brighten my heart, dear Jesus, with the light of Your presence. Remove all darkness from my soul. Restrain my wandering thoughts and clear away the temptations that seek to harm me. Fight for me with Your power, and cast out the wild beasts of lust and temptation, so that peace may fill the walls of my heart and praise rise from its courts (Psalm 122:7)—that is, from a clean and peaceful conscience. Speak to the winds and the storm within me; say to the sea, "Be still," and to the wind, "Quiet!"—and there will be great peace.

9. Send out Your light and Your truth (Psalm 43:3), and let them shine in this dark earth of mine, for I am dust—formless and void—until You give me shape. Pour down Your grace from above; water my heart with the dew of heaven. Let the waters of devotion soak the soil of my soul so it may bear good and pleasing fruit. Lift my mind, heavy with sin, and raise my desires to heavenly things. Once I taste the joy that comes from above, I'll lose interest in the things of earth.

10. Pull me away from every unstable comfort the world offers, for nothing created can truly satisfy or comfort my soul. Bind me to Yourself with cords of love that cannot be broken, for You alone are enough for the one who loves You. Without You, everything else is empty and meaningless.

    (1) Psalm 71:12 (2) Isaiah 45:2 (3) Psalm 122: 7 (4) Psalm 43:3

Additional Bible References

- **Matthew 11:29** – "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."
- **Luke 14:11** – "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted."
- **James 4:7** – "Submit therefore to God. But resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
- **John 14:27** – "Peace I leave you, My peace I give you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled, nor fearful."
- **Philippians 4:6–7** – "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything... let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God... will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

Teach Me to Rest in You

[Verse 1]
Lord, You showed the way to peace,
Not in power, but in release.
To choose the low, to serve the small,
To trust Your will above it all.

[Chorus]
Teach me to rest in You alone,
When stormy thoughts around me groan.
Still my heart and hush the sea,
Until Your calm has covered me.

[Verse 2]
Not my will, but Yours be done,
In every battle lost or won.
Less of me and more of You,
Until my heart is tried and true.

[Bridge]
Let evil thoughts just pass me by,
And darkness scatter when You're nigh.
Speak, O Lord, and still the storm—
In Your love, my soul is warm.

[Chorus]
Teach me to rest in You alone,
When stormy thoughts around me groan.
Still my heart and hush the sea,
Until Your calm has covered me.

[Outro]
Bind me close in love's pure flame,
And let my soul praise Your great name.
No gift or glory do I seek—
Just Your nearness, mild and meek.

Chapter 24: On Avoiding Unnecessary Curiosity About Others

1. “My child, do not be curious or burden yourself with pointless concerns. *What is that to you? Follow Me* (John 21:22). What does it matter to you whether someone is this or that, or says or does one thing or another? You are not responsible for anyone else’s choices—you will only give an account for yourself. Why, then, do you get entangled in things that are not yours to manage?

   Look, I know every person. I see everything that happens under the sun. I know each one's thoughts, intentions, and the end to which their desires are leading. So leave all of that to Me. Keep watch over your own soul in peace, and let the one who is restless stay restless if he must. Whatever he does or says will return to him in time—he cannot deceive Me.

2. Don’t waste your energy chasing after a reputation, or worrying about how many friends you have, or whether people love you. These things only bring distraction and heartache. Instead, let My Word speak freely to your heart. I would show you hidden things—secrets of the Spirit—if only you would watch for My presence and open the doors of your heart to Me. Be alert and devoted to prayer (1 Peter 4:7), and walk humbly in everything.”

   John 21:22 (2) 1 Peter 4:7

Additional Bible References

- **Proverbs 4:23** – "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life."
- **Romans 14:10** – "But as for you, why do you judge your brother or sister? ... For we will all appear before the judgment seat of God."
- **1 Thessalonians 4:11** – "Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands."
- **Matthew 6:1** – "Take care not to practice your righteousness in the sight of people, to be noticed by them..."
- **Galatians 1:10** – "For am I now seeking the favor of people, or of God? ... If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.”

What Is That to You?

[Verse 1]
What is that to you, My child?
Do not chase what others do.
Fix your eyes upon My path,
And I will guide your journey through.

[Chorus]
Follow Me and find your peace,
Let the restless hearts run free.
You are Mine, and that's enough—
Come and walk the road with Me.

[Verse 2]
You don't answer for their ways,
Only give account for you.
I know every secret thought,
Every motive passing through.

[Bridge]
Don't be swayed by fleeting fame,
Or the crowd's uncertain cheer.
I will whisper in the quiet,
If you'll let Me draw you near.

[Chorus]
Follow Me and find your peace,
Let the restless hearts run free.
You are Mine, and that's enough—
Come and walk the road with Me.

[Outro]
Open wide your heart's locked door,
Let My Spirit speak within.
In My presence stay content,
Far from envy, pride, or sin.

Chapter 25: Where Lasting Peace of Heart and Real Spiritual Growth Are Found

1. “My child, I said, *Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you—not as the world gives do I give to you* (John 14:27). Everyone wants peace, but not everyone pursues what truly leads to peace. My peace is found with the humble and the lowly in heart. Your peace will come through deep patience. If you would listen to Me and follow My voice, you would experience much peace.”

2. What then should I do, Lord?

3. “In all things, pay attention to yourself—watch what you do and say. Make it your aim to please Me alone, and do not seek or desire anything apart from Me. Also, don’t rush to judge the words or actions of others, and don’t get involved in matters that are not your responsibility. If you do this, you will be less disturbed and more at peace. Still, to feel no distress at all or to be entirely free of pain in your heart or body—this belongs not to this present life, but to the eternal rest that is yet to come. So don’t think you’ve found true peace just because you feel no sorrow; don’t assume everything is right just because no one opposes you; and don’t imagine that perfection means getting everything you want. Nor should you think you’re someone special or especially loved just because you feel spiritual excitement or sweetness in your soul. These are not the marks of a true lover of righteousness, nor do they show where real growth and holiness are found.”

4. Then in what do they consist, Lord?

5. “In surrendering yourself completely to My will, with all your heart. In not seeking your own way—whether in great things or small, temporal or eternal. True peace is found when you give thanks to Me in both blessing and trial, and view both with the same steady heart. If you are courageous and enduring in hope—if, when your inner comfort is taken away, you still prepare your heart to endure and do not claim that you deserve better, but instead justify Me in all I allow and bless My holy name—then you are walking the true path of peace. You will have a sure hope of one day seeing My face with joy. For when you finally come to despise your pride and self-focus completely, you will experience peace in abundance—at least as much as is possible while you're still a sojourner in this world.”

   John 14:27

Additional Bible References

- **Isaiah 26:3** – "The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in You."

- **Philippians 4:7** – "And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

- **Psalm 131:2** – "I have certainly soothed and quieted my soul; like a weaned child resting against his mother."
- **Romans 14:19** – "So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another."
- **2 Thessalonians 3:16** – "Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance."

Peace That Remains

[Verse 1]
You promised peace, not like the world,
A calm the storm can’t shake.
Not found in ease or empty praise,
But in the steps I take.

[Chorus]
I will walk where You lead,
Through the fire or the rain.
If I lose all I own,
Still I’ll praise through the pain.
For the peace that remains
Is the peace found in You.

[Verse 2]
Not in applause or comfort's throne,
Nor dreams that fade away,
But in the heart bowed low to You,
Content in Your delay.

[Bridge]
Let joy or sorrow come today,
I’ll weigh them both the same.
Your will is peace, Your voice my guide,
I bless Your holy name.

[Chorus]
I will walk where You lead,
Through the fire or the rain.
If I lose all I own,
Still I’ll praise through the pain.
For the peace that remains
Is the peace found in You.

[Outro]
When I see You face to face,
Every trial will be through.
But until that day arrives,
I will rest my soul in You.

Chapter 26: How a Free Spirit Is Exalted More by Humble Prayer Than by Constant Study

1. Lord, this is the mark of a mature believer: to keep his heart continually focused on heavenly things—and to move through the burdens of daily life with a peaceful spirit, not by becoming indifferent, but by living with the freedom that comes from not being overly attached to anything in this world.

2. I ask You, my most merciful Lord and God, protect me from the distractions of this life, so that I don't become too entangled in them; protect me from the demands of the body, so I'm not held captive by comfort or pleasure; protect me from the inward weights that burden the spirit, so I'm not overwhelmed by anxiety. I'm not even asking to be free from the vain things the world eagerly pursues, but from those painful effects of the human condition—things that press down on the soul like a heavy curse, making it hard to reach the spiritual freedom it longs for.

3. O God, my unspeakable sweetness, turn every fleshly comfort into bitterness when it pulls me away from the love of eternal things. Don't let temporary pleasures seduce me and draw me from You. Do not let my flesh and blood dominate me. Do not let the world with its fleeting praise deceive me. Do not let the devil, with his craftiness, trip me up. Give me strength to resist, endurance to suffer well, and determination to stay faithful. In place of worldly comforts, give me the gentle anointing of Your Holy Spirit; and instead of shallow, fleshly affections, fill me with love for Your Name.

4. Food, drink, clothing, and all the other necessities of life are burdensome to a soul that longs to be with You. Help me to use these things with moderation, and not fall into the trap of loving them too much. I know I cannot reject them altogether—because the body must be sustained—but Your Word forbids us to indulge in excess and luxury, since doing so causes the flesh to rebel against the Spirit. In all these matters, I ask that Your hand would guide and teach me, so that I never go too far.

Additional Bible References

- **Colossians 3:2** – "Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth."
- **Galatians 5:16** – "Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh."
- **1 Peter 5:7** – "Having cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares about you."
- **Psalm 119:36–37** – "Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to dishonest gain. Turn my eyes away from looking at what is worthless."
- **Matthew 6:33** – "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided to you."

All for the Name I Love

[Verse 1]
Lord, teach my heart to rise above
The comforts that would dull my love.
Though daily needs must still be met,
Don't let my soul forget.

[Chorus]
All for the Name I love, I pray—
No worldly charm shall lead me stray.
With Spirit's fire my soul ignite,
And keep me walking in Your light.

[Verse 2]
Let not my flesh, the world, or lies
Distract my soul from heaven's prize.
Replace all craving in my soul
With passion for Your goal.

[Bridge]
Guide my hands, and guard my heart,
Teach me wisdom to depart
From every weight that slows me down—
Until I wear the victor's crown.

[Chorus]
All for the Name I love, I pray—
No worldly charm shall lead me stray.
With Spirit's fire my soul ignite,
And keep me walking in Your light.

[Outro]
Your Name, O Lord, is joy and rest—
In You alone my soul is blessed.

[Chorus]
All for the Name I love, I pray—
No worldly charm shall lead me stray.
With Spirit's fire my soul ignite,
And keep me walking in Your light.
And keep me walking in Your light.

Chapter 27: That personal love greatly hinders us from the highest good

1. “My child, you must surrender everything, and not claim anything as your own. Know this: self-love harms you more than anything else in the world. Everything clings to you more or less, depending on the love and attachment you have for it. If your love is pure, sincere, and rightly ordered, you won’t be enslaved by anything. Don’t crave what you’re not meant to have; don’t cling to anything that would hinder you or rob you of inner freedom. It’s strange that you haven’t entrusted your whole self to Me—everything you desire or possess.”

2. “Why are you distressed by empty sorrow? Why are you weighed down by unnecessary worries? Stand firmly in My will, and you will not suffer loss. You will never be at peace if you chase this or that, seeking what’s best for you or most pleasing to your tastes. Something will always be lacking. Someone will always oppose you.”

3. “It’s not gaining or multiplying things that will help you, but letting go of them and rooting their desires out of your heart. This applies not only to money and possessions, but also to your craving for praise and honor—things that all pass away with the world. A new location won’t help you if devotion is missing. And no peace you try to find outwardly will last if your heart isn’t built on the solid foundation of Me. You can change your surroundings, but you can’t improve yourself that way; because when the next challenge comes, you’ll find that you’ve brought the same burdens with you—and more.”

A Prayer for Cleansing the Heart and Receiving Heavenly Wisdom

4. Strengthen me, God, through Your Holy Spirit. Give me inner strength so I can be free from fruitless worry and distractions. Keep me from chasing after anything—big or small—that takes my heart away from You. Help me see everything as fleeting, including myself. Everything under the sun is empty, and all of it is just chasing the wind. (1)

5. Lord, give me heavenly wisdom. Teach me to seek You above all else and find joy in You alone. Let me love You above everything. Help me see all other things clearly, in the light of Your wisdom. Teach me to wisely avoid flatterers and patiently endure those who oppose me. That’s true wisdom—not to be shaken by every word or fooled by seductive praise. That’s how we walk steadily in the path You’ve set before us.

(1) Ecclesiastes 2:11

Additional Bible References

- **Philippians 2:3** — "Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but with humility consider one another as more important than yourselves."

- **1 Corinthians 13:5** — "[Love] does not seek its own benefit; it is not provoked."

- **Luke 9:23** — "If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me."
- **Psalm 73:25** — "Whom do I have in heaven but You? And with You, I desire nothing on earth."
- **Proverbs 4:23** — "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life."

All for You Alone

[Verse 1]
I've chased the wind, I've held on tight
To fleeting things that fade from sight
But now I see, my restless soul
Was made for You to make me whole

[Chorus]
All for You, and You alone
Every breath, and heart, and home
Let me lose what blinds my eyes
So I can see the greater prize
You are the joy, the peace, the throne
I give it all for You alone

[Verse 2]
I've bowed to pride and sought my way
But peace escaped me every day
No place or praise could satisfy
Until I saw the truth and cried

[Bridge]
Cut the cords that tie me down
Lift me up from shifting ground
Give me love that counts no cost
Let me count this world as loss

[Chorus]
All for You, and You alone
Every breath, and heart, and home
Let me lose what blinds my eyes
So I can see the greater prize
You are the joy, the peace, the throne
I give it all for You alone

[Outro]
Take my heart, remove my claim
Let Your love be all that remains
You are enough, I've always known
I give it all for You alone

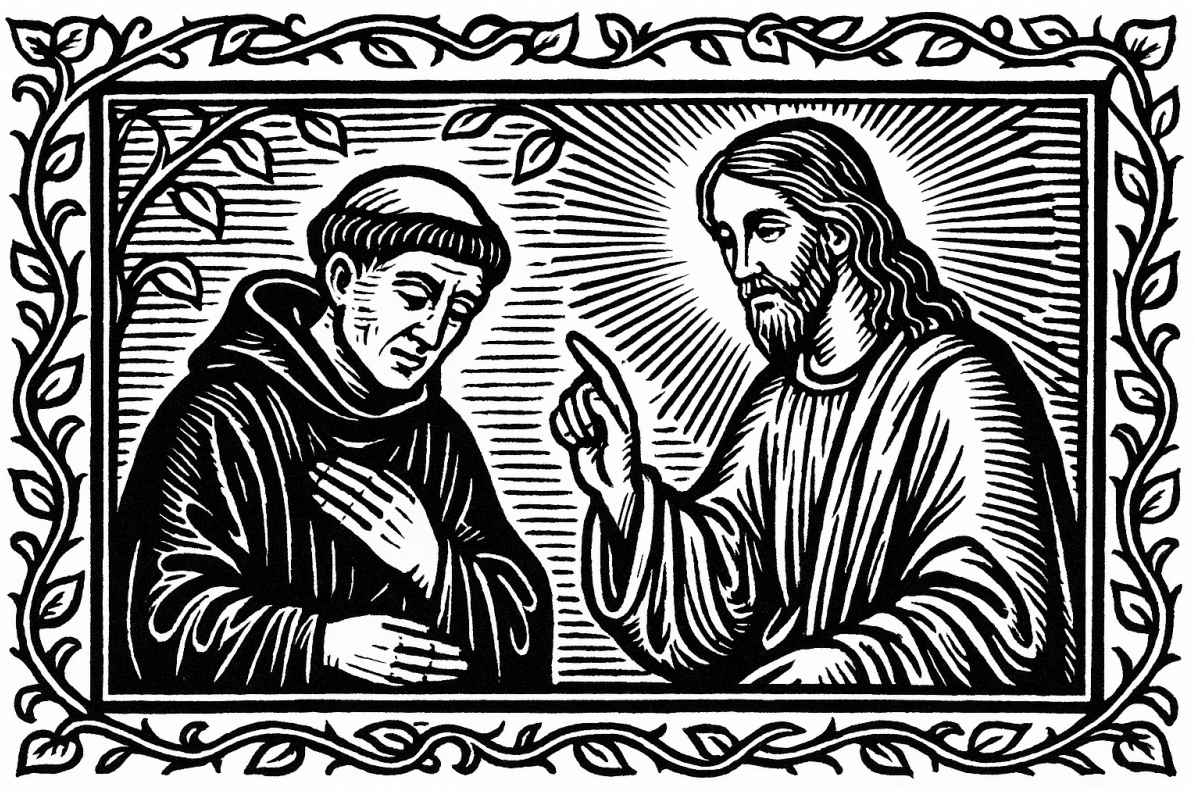
Chapter 28: Against the tongues of detractors

1. “My child, don’t be discouraged when others think poorly of you or say things you don’t want to hear. You should already have a lower opinion of yourself than they do, and consider no one weaker than yourself. If you walk closely with Me inwardly, you won’t be overly affected by fleeting words. It takes true wisdom to stay silent in times of hostility and to turn your heart toward Me instead of being disturbed by human opinions.”

2. “Don’t let your peace depend on what others say. Whether they speak well or poorly of you, you are still the same person in My sight. Where can true peace or real honor be found? Isn’t it found in Me? Whoever doesn’t seek to please people, nor fears their displeasure, will enjoy deep and lasting peace. Every disturbance of heart and every distraction of the senses comes from misplaced love or fear rooted in vanity.”

Additional Bible References

- **Proverbs 29:25** — "The fear of man brings a snare, but one who trusts in the Lord will be protected."
- **Galatians 1:10** — "For am I now seeking the favor of people, or of God? Or am I striving to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ."
- **Isaiah 51:7** — "Do not fear the taunting of people, nor be terrified of their insults."
- **1 Peter 2:23** — "While being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He did not threaten, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously."
- **Psalm 56:11** — "In God I have put my trust, I shall not be afraid. What can mankind do to me?”



What They Say

[Verse 1]
They speak my name in twisted ways
They cast their words like shadowed blades
But I will not be drawn to fight
My peace is found in higher light

[Chorus]
What they say can't shake the ground
Where my soul is safely found
In Your truth I'm standing still
No man's praise, no human will
Can take the peace You've placed in me
What they say can't make me flee

[Verse 2]
I've heard the lies, I've felt the sting
But I belong to Christ my King
I won't defend what's not my own
My worth is settled near Your throne

[Bridge]
Let them talk, let whispers fly
I won't chase them—I'll lift my eyes
To You, the Judge who knows what's true
I need no other voice but You

[Chorus]
What they say can't shake the ground
Where my soul is safely found
In Your truth I'm standing still
No man's praise, no human will
Can take the peace You've placed in me
What they say can't make me flee

[Outro]
With quiet heart, I'll walk Your way
No matter what the world may say

Chapter 29: How we must call upon and bless God when tribulation comes

1. Blessed be Your name, O Lord, forever, for You have allowed this trial and suffering to come upon me. I cannot escape it, but I must run to You so that You may help me and turn it to my good. Lord, I am in distress, and my heart is not at peace. The weight of this suffering burdens me deeply. And now, dear Father, what can I say? I've been caught in a net. Save me from this hour—but for this very purpose I came to this hour, so that You might be glorified when I am humbled and delivered by Your hand. May it please You to rescue me. For I am poor and helpless—where else can I go but to You? Give me patience in this moment. Help me, Lord my God, and I will not be afraid, no matter how heavy the burden becomes.

2. So what shall I say while I endure this? Lord, let Your will be done. I know I deserve this trouble and the weight of it. Therefore, I must endure—may it be with patience—until the storm passes and comfort returns. Still, Your mighty arm can remove this trial or reduce its weight so that it doesn't crush me. Just as You have delivered me many times before, O merciful God, I trust You again now. What seems impossible for me is easy for You, O right hand of the Most High.

   (1) John 12:27 (2) Psalm 40:16

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 50:15** — "Call upon Me on the day of trouble; I will rescue you, and you will honor Me."
- **2 Corinthians 12:9** — "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."
- **Romans 5:3–4** — "We also celebrate in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope."
- **James 1:12** — "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."
- **Psalm 34:19** — "The afflictions of the righteous are many, but the Lord rescues him from them all."

You Will Deliver Me

[Verse 1]
Blessed be Your holy name
Though the winds rise and I feel the flame
I cannot flee, I cannot hide
But in You, O Lord, I will confide

[Chorus]
You will deliver me,
Though I am weighed and worn
You will deliver me,
Though I feel bruised and torn
When the storm is fierce and I can barely breathe
You are near—I still believe
You will deliver me

[Verse 2]
Lord, I've walked this road before
Caught in snares I can't ignore
Yet every time Your hand was strong
To lift me when the nights were long

[Bridge]
Not my will but Yours be done
In the fire, make me one
With the Savior who endured
So Your glory might be sure

[Chorus]
You will deliver me,
Though I am weighed and worn
You will deliver me,
Though I feel bruised and torn
When the storm is fierce and I can barely breathe
You are near—I still believe
You will deliver me

[Outro]
You have delivered me before
And I will trust You evermore

Chapter 30: On Seeking God's Help and Trusting in His Grace

1. "My child, I am your refuge in times of trouble. Come to Me when your heart is heavy.

   "This is why you so often miss the comfort of heaven—you turn to Me too slowly in prayer. Before truly seeking Me, you look for help and distraction elsewhere, trying to find comfort in outward things. But none of it will help you much until you realize that I alone rescue those who trust in Me. Apart from Me, there is no true help, no wisdom that lasts, no remedy that endures. But now that the storm is past, gather your strength and take courage from My mercy. I am near, says the Lord, and I will restore —not only what you had before but even more, in abundance and overflowing grace."

2. "Is anything too hard for Me? Am I like a man who makes promises but doesn't keep them? Where is your faith? Stand firm. Keep going with perseverance. Be patient and strong. The comfort you long for will come at the right time. Wait for Me—yes, wait. I will come and heal you. What troubles you is temptation, and your fear is only fear —it has no power. What do worries about the future give you except more sorrow? Each day has enough trouble of its own. It's pointless and exhausting to be upset or proud about things that may never happen."

3. "But it is human nature to be drawn into these worries. It shows how weak your mind still is when the enemy can distract you so easily. He doesn't care whether he tricks you with truth or lies, whether he drags you down by loving the present or fearing the future. So don't let your heart be troubled, and don't be afraid. Trust in Me, believe in My mercy. When you think I'm far away, I may be closer than ever. When it feels like all is lost, often that's when the biggest breakthrough is near. Just because something doesn't go your way doesn't mean everything is ruined. You must not judge things based on how they feel in the moment or let every difficulty swallow up your heart."

4. "Don't think I've abandoned you, even if I send trials your way or withdraw the comfort you're used to. This is the path to the Kingdom of Heaven. And it's truly better for you—and for all My followers—to be tested through hardship than always to get your way. I know your secret thoughts and that it's for your soul's good that you sometimes lack the comfort you desire. Otherwise, you might grow proud in your success or love yourself more than you should. I gave it; I can take it away and give it back again, whenever I choose."

5. "Whatever I give is still Mine. Whatever I take, I haven't taken something that belongs to you—because every good and perfect gift is from Me. So, don't be angry or bitter if I send suffering or hardship. I can lift you up quickly and turn your sorrow into joy. And when I do, you'll see that I'm not only just but also worthy of all praise."

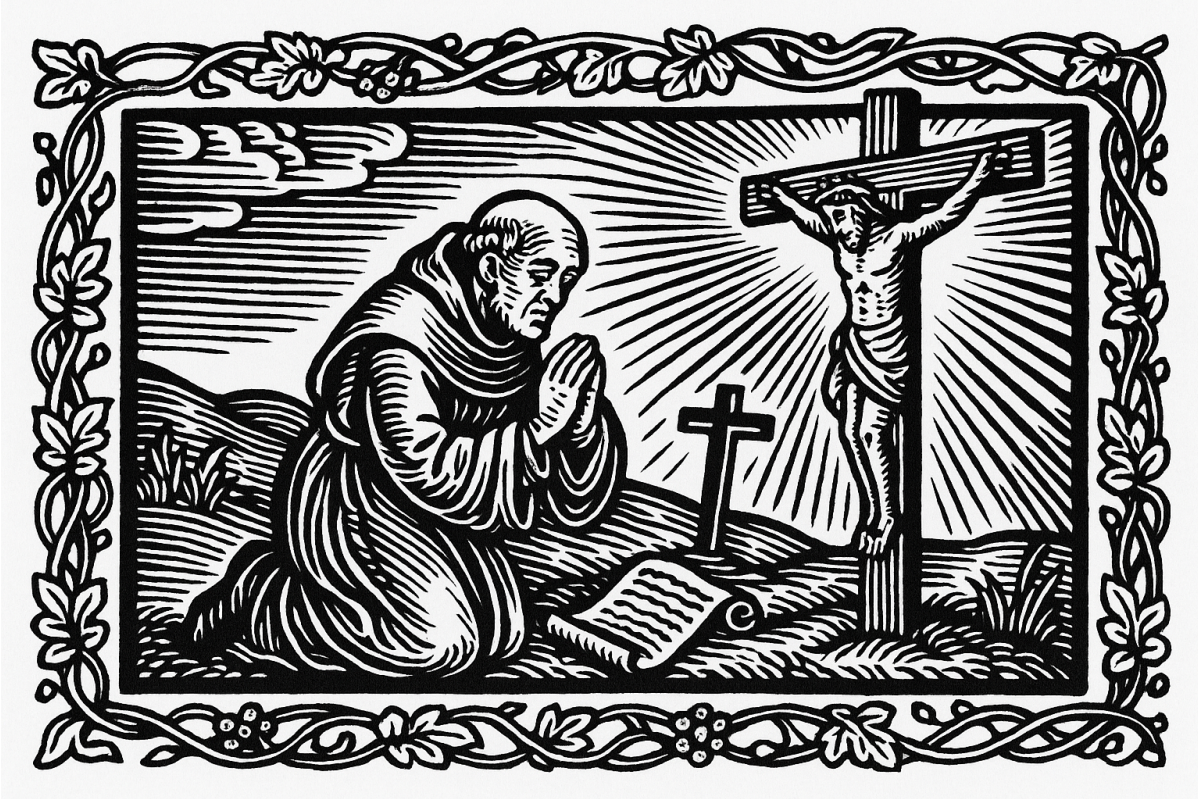
6. "If you really understood this, you would never be so downcast during hard times. Instead, you'd rejoice and give thanks. You'd consider it a great blessing that I don't spare you from sorrow. As the Father has loved Me, so I have loved you. That's what

I told My disciples. I didn't send them into a world of comfort, but to face great trials. Not to win honor, but to endure rejection. Not to seek ease, but to labor and bear fruit through perseverance. Remember these words, My child."

(1) Nahum 1:7 (2) Matthew 6:34 (3) John 14:27; Psalm 13:5 (4) James 1:17 (5) John 15:9

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 46:1** – "God is our refuge and strength, a very ready help in trouble."
- **Isaiah 41:10** – "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God."
- **Romans 8:18** – "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."
- **1 Peter 5:10** – "After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace... will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen, and establish you."
- **Lamentations 3:22–23** – "The Lord's acts of mercy indeed do not end... They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness."



My Shelter and My Song

[Verse 1]
When the storm is raging all around,
And hope feels lost beneath the waves,
I run to You, my solid ground,
The One whose mercy never fades.

[Chorus]
You are my shelter, You are my song,
You hold me close when nights are long.
When I am weak, You make me strong—
Forever faithful, forever God.

[Verse 2]
I chased the world for peace in vain,
But none could heal my soul's distress.
Now I have learned through joy and pain,
Your grace alone brings righteousness.

[Bridge]
Even when the sky is silent,
Even when my prayers are dry,
You are near—so true, so constant—
Lifting my eyes to heaven's light.

[Chorus]
You are my shelter, You are my song,
You hold me close when nights are long.
When I am weak, You make me strong—
Forever faithful, forever God.

[Outro]
So I will wait, my hope secure,
For joy will rise and love endure.
Through every trial, right or wrong—
You are my shelter and my song.

Chapter 31: Of the Neglect of Every Creature, That the Creator May Be Found

1. Lord, I still need more grace if I want to reach the place where neither people nor any created thing can get in the way. As long as anything holds me back, I cannot freely fly to You. The one who longed to take flight cried out, "Oh that I had wings like a dove, then I would fly away and be at rest." What is more peaceful than a single-minded heart? And what is freer than the person who desires nothing from this earth? So a person must rise above all creation, forsake himself completely, and stand with a detached mind, beholding that You, the Creator of all, have no equal among all the things You have made. Unless a person is set free from all created things, he cannot reach out freely for heavenly things. That is why so few people truly give themselves to contemplation—because so few know how to detach themselves from perishable, created things entirely.

2. Great grace is required for this, grace that lifts the soul and raises it above itself. Unless a person is lifted in the Spirit, freed from all creatures, and united entirely with God, then everything he knows and possesses matters little. Whoever counts anything as significant other than the one eternal, incomprehensible, and good God will remain small and low. Anything that is not God is nothing and should be counted as nothing. There is a significant difference between a godly person enlightened by divine wisdom and a scholar merely filled with head knowledge and books. The wisdom that flows down from above, from the fullness of God, is far more noble than the wisdom that comes from human labor and study.

3. Many people want to experience deep communion with God, but do not work at what is required for it. One major obstacle is that we give too much importance to symbols and external signs, and not enough to deep inner transformation. I don't know what spirit we're following, or what goal we spiritual people are even chasing, when we work so hard and anxiously for things that pass away, and so rarely focus our minds on the state of our own souls.

4. Oh, how quickly we rush out of our quiet moments—and how little we examine our motives! We ignore what we love or value—and we don't grieve over the impurity in our lives. The great flood came because all humanity had corrupted itself on the earth. So, when our inner affections are polluted, our outward actions must also be. What we do flows from the condition of our hearts. When the heart is pure, our actions are right.

5. We often ask, "What has this person done?"—but we don't ask, "How much of it came from a godly heart?" We want to know whether someone is strong, rich, attractive, intelligent, skilled in writing, music, or craft. But we ask very little about whether he is poor in spirit, patient, gentle, devoted, or reflective. The world looks at the outside, but grace looks to the heart. Human judgment is often wrong—but grace relies on God and cannot be deceived.

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 55:6** – "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest."
- **1 Samuel 16:7** – "For God does not see as man sees, since man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."
- **Colossians 3:2** – "Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth."
- **Ecclesiastes 1:14** – "I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all is futility and striving after wind."
- **Philippians 3:8** – "I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."

Only You Remain

[Verse 1]
I have searched the things below
But they all just fade and go
I have grasped and I have clung
But my heart remains unsung
Nothing here can satisfy
Till I lift my eyes and cry

[Chorus]
Only You remain, my God, my prize
Above the earth, above the skies
All things fade, but still You stay
Draw me to Yourself today
Let my soul no more complain
For You alone, O Lord, remain

[Verse 2]
Books and beauty, wit and fame
All are shadows with a name
But Your light breaks through the dust
Lifting hearts that learn to trust
Let me rise beyond this ground
Where true holiness is found

[Chorus]
Only You remain, my God, my prize
Above the earth, above the skies
All things fade, but still You stay
Draw me to Yourself today
Let my soul no more complain
For You alone, O Lord, remain

[Bridge]
Free my heart from every chain
Purge the love that seeks in vain
Strip me bare of all I crave
Fill me with the love that saves

[Final Chorus]
Only You remain, my God, my prize
Above the earth, above the skies
All things fade, but still You stay
Draw me to Yourself today
Let my soul no more complain
For You alone, O Lord, remain

Chapter 32: Of Self-Denial and the Casting Away All Selfishness

1. "My child, you cannot possess true freedom unless you completely deny yourself. All who cling to their possessions are enslaved—those who love themselves, the selfish, the curious, the restless, those who chase comfort instead of the things of Jesus Christ, and those who are constantly scheming to build what cannot last. For anything that does not come from God will perish. Hold tightly to this short but complete truth: 'Renounce all things, and you will find all things; surrender your desires, and you will find rest.' Keep this saying in your heart; once it fills your thoughts, you'll begin to understand everything."

2. O Lord, this isn't something that can be accomplished in a day, nor is it child's play. Truly, this one short saying contains all the perfection of the Christian life.

3. "My child, don't be discouraged or disheartened when you hear about the path of the perfect. Instead, let it stir you to aim higher. At the very least, let it ignite in you a holy longing. Oh, if only this were true of you—if only you no longer loved yourself, but were always ready to follow My prompting and to obey the one I have placed over you as your spiritual authority. Then you would delight Me greatly, and your whole life would be filled with joy and peace. But there are still many things you must surrender. If you don't give them up fully to Me, you will not obtain what you seek. I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become truly wealthy (1)—that is, heavenly wisdom, which regards all lowly things as precious. Cast away worldly wisdom and every form of pleasure, whether it is the common delight of mankind or your own personal craving."

4. "Let Me tell you: you must be willing to exchange what is esteemed by the world for what it considers worthless. True heavenly wisdom is seen as contemptible, lowly, and almost forgotten. It does not think highly of itself or seek honor on earth. Many honor it with their lips, but their hearts are far from it. This is the pearl of great price, and it remains hidden from most people."

(1) Revelation 3:18.

Additional Bible References

- **Matthew 16:24** – "If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me."

- **Philippians 2:3** – "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility consider one another as more important than yourselves."

- **1 John 2:17** – "The world is passing away and also its lusts, but the one who does the will of God continues to live forever."

- **Matthew 13:45-46** – "The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold everything that he had and bought it."

- **Galatians 5:24** – "Now those who belong to Christ Jesus crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."

The Pearl Worth Everything

[Verse 1]
Take it all, my Lord, my treasure
All my comfort, all my pride
Let me hold to You alone now
Let the world be crucified
I renounce the fleeting pleasures
For the joy that never ends
Give me wisdom from the heavens
And a heart that You defend

[Chorus]
The pearl worth everything I own
Is found in You, and You alone
Though all the world may pass me by
Still I will live, and I will die
For love that bids me come and see
What's hidden now in mystery

[Verse 2]
Not my dreams and not my striving
Not the things I once called gain
But the whisper of Your Spirit
Calling through the loss and pain
Make me poor in all I cling to
Make me rich in what is true
Let me buy what none can purchase
Just by giving all to You

[Chorus]
The pearl worth everything I own
Is found in You, and You alone
Though all the world may pass me by
Still I will live, and I will die
For love that bids me come and see
What's hidden now in mystery

[Bridge]
I am Yours—no turning back
You are all I'll ever lack
Burn the chaff and light the flame
Till only You remain

[Final Chorus]
The pearl worth everything I own
Is found in You, and You alone
Though all the world may pass me by
Still I will live, and I will die
For love that bids me come and see
What's hidden now in mystery

Chapter 33: Of Instability of the Heart, and of Directing the Aim Toward God

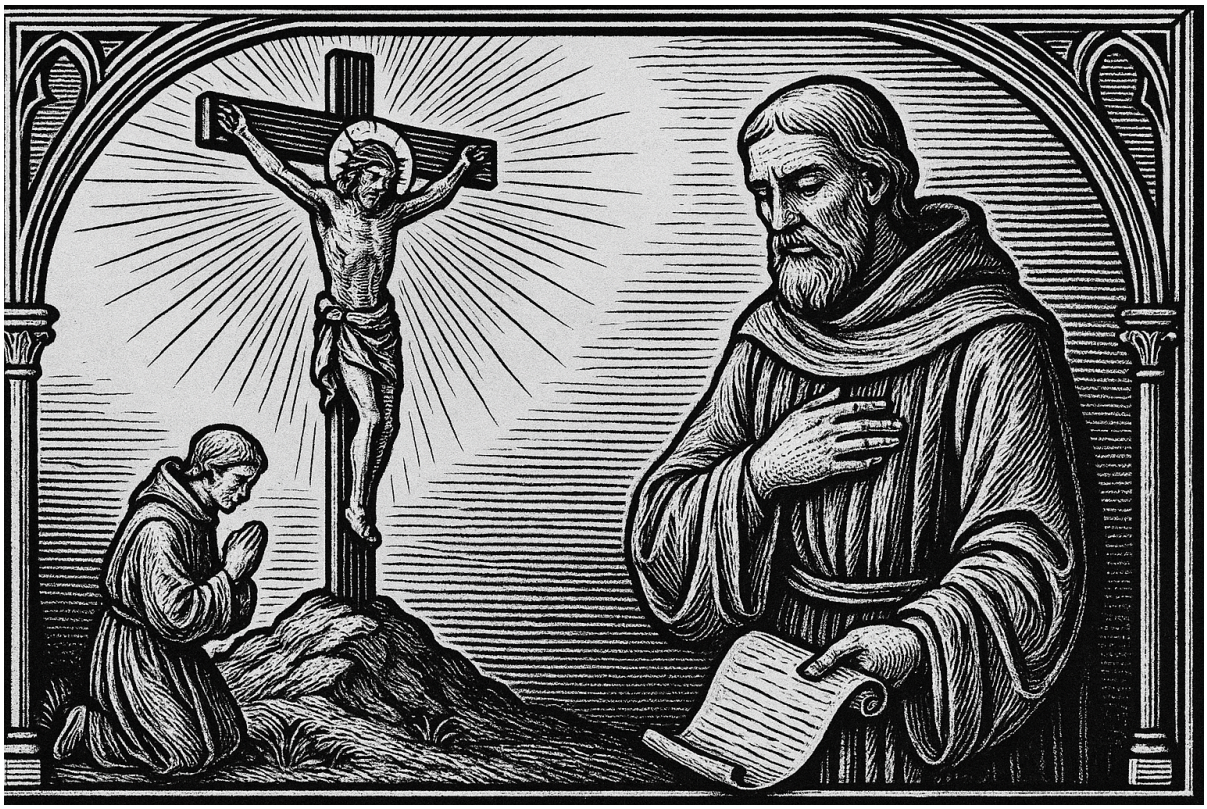
1. "My child, do not put your trust in your feelings, for what you feel now will quickly turn into something else. You are subject to change as long as you live—even if you resist it. One moment you may be joyful, the next sorrowful; one moment at peace, the next unsettled; now spiritually zealous, now dry and disinterested; now diligent, then distracted; now burdened, then cheerful. But the wise person, the one truly taught by the Spirit, rises above these shifting emotions. He does not focus on what he feels or how the winds of change are blowing. Instead, he sets the whole intention of his heart on reaching the true and longed-for goal. In this way, he remains steady and unshaken—his inner eye fixed firmly on Me, no matter what changes swirl around him."

2. "The purer a person's intention is, the more steadfastly he moves forward through the storms of life. But many allow the eye of their intent to become dim. They quickly become attached to whatever pleasure appears, and few are completely free from the stain of selfish desire. Just like the Jews of old who came to Bethany—not to see Me, but to see Lazarus, whom I had raised from the dead(1). This is why your inner eye must be cleansed, so that it is clear and pure. Then it can remain focused—above all things that might distract you—on Me."

(1) John 12:9.

Additional Bible References

- **James 1:6** – "For the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind."
- **Matthew 6:22** – "The eye is the lamp of the body; so then, if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light."
- **Hebrews 12:2** – "Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the originator and perfecter of the faith."
- **Philippians 3:13-14** – "Forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."
- **Psalm 112:7** – "He will not fear bad news; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord."



Steady My Heart

[Verse 1]
When joy turns to sorrow, when peace turns to fear
When clouds chase the sunlight and hope disappears
Still You remain, unchanging and true
So fix my heart's vision, Lord, only on You

[Chorus]
Steady my heart when the winds start to blow
Keep me from drifting wherever they go
Anchor my soul in the light of Your face
Fix me forever in mercy and grace

[Verse 2]
Too often I falter, I look all around
Distracted by pleasures or storms that abound
But You are my center, my refuge, my aim
So purify every desire in Your name

[Chorus]
Steady my heart when the winds start to blow
Keep me from drifting wherever they go
Anchor my soul in the light of Your face
Fix me forever in mercy and grace

[Bridge]
Not for the signs, not for the gain
But just for Your glory I run through the rain
Burn away shadows that darken my sight
Till all that remains is the flame of Your light

[Final Chorus]
Steady my heart when the winds start to blow
Keep me from drifting wherever they go
Anchor my soul in the light of Your face
Fix me forever in mercy and grace

Chapter 34: That to Him Who Loves God, God Is Sweet Above All Things and in All Things

1. Behold, God is mine, and all things are mine! What more could I want? What greater joy could I desire? O delightful and sweet world—if only it were to the one who loves the Word, not the world, nor the things that are in the world.(1) My God, my all! For the one who understands, that single phrase is enough; and repeating it often brings joy to the one who loves You. When You are near, all things are joyful; when You are absent, all things are wearisome. You bring rest to the heart, give it deep peace and festival joy. You cause it to think rightly about everything, and to praise You in all things. Nothing is truly pleasant for long without You; if it is sweet and lasting, Your grace must be in it, and Your wisdom must give it savor.

2. To the one who has tasted You, what could be bitter? And to the one who has not tasted You, what could possibly bring joy? But the worldly wise and the lovers of the flesh—these fail to grasp Your wisdom. For the world's wisdom is pure vanity, and to be carnally minded is death. But those who follow You through a rejection of the world and the denial of the flesh are truly wise, for they are moved from vanity to truth, from flesh to spirit. They taste and see that the Lord is good, and whatever good they see in creation, they trace it back to the praise of the Creator. Oh, how utterly different—is the enjoyment of the Creator compared to the enjoyment of the creature; the enjoyment of eternity compared to the enjoyment of time; the enjoyment of uncreated light compared to the enjoyment of reflected light.

3. O everlasting Light, brighter than all created lights, shine from above! Pierce the very depths of my heart. Give purity, joy, clarity, and life to my soul, so that with all its strength it may cling to You in love that surpasses all understanding. Oh, when will that blessed and longed-for day come, when You will satisfy me with Your presence and be to me everything? As long as that day is delayed, my joy will not be complete. Ah! The old nature still lives in me—it is not yet fully crucified, not fully dead. It still lusts against the spirit, it still stirs up inner conflict, and refuses to let the soul’s kingdom rest in peace.

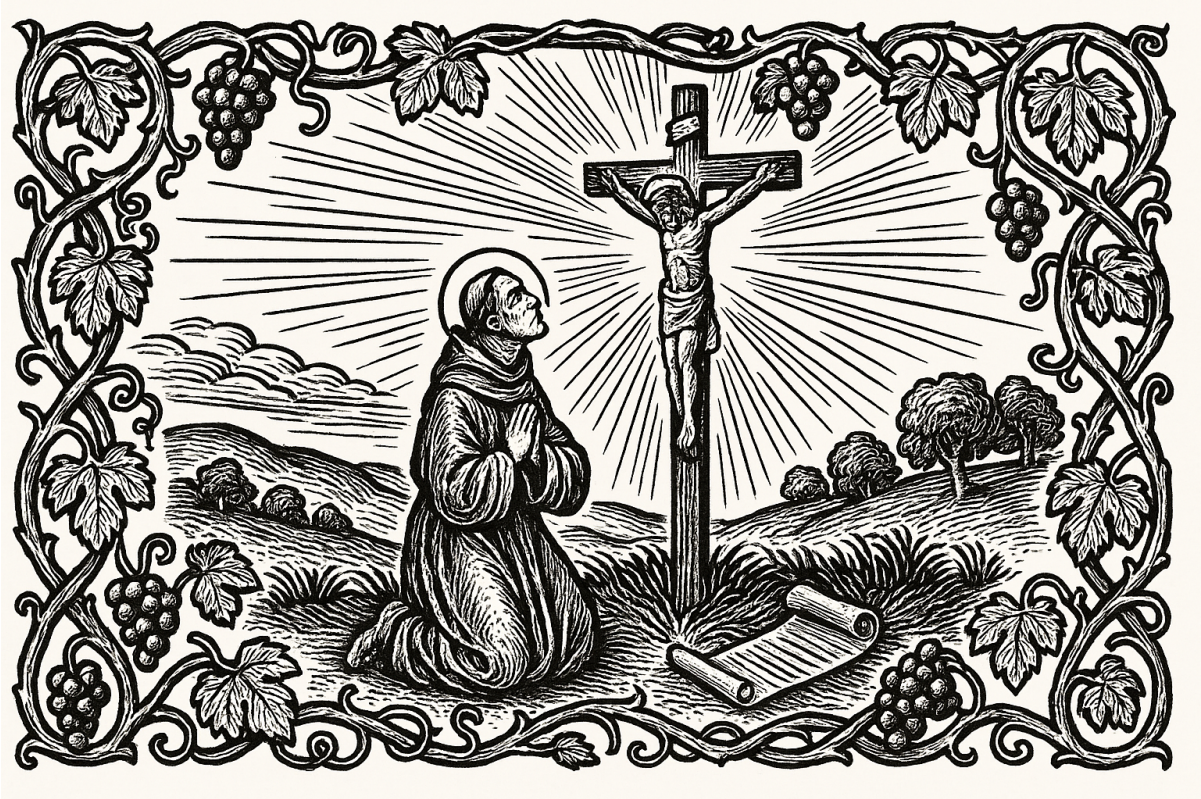
4. But You, Lord, who rule the raging sea and still the waves when they rise, rise up and help me. Scatter those who stir up conflict within. (2) Defeat them by Your power. Show Your strength, I pray, and let Your right hand be glorified—for I have no hope, no refuge but You, O Lord my God.

(1) 1 John 2:15.
(2) Psalm 68:30.

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 34:8** – "Taste and see that the Lord is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!"

- **Galatians 5:17** – "For the desire of the flesh is against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh..."
- **Romans 8:6** – "For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace."
- **Philippians 3:8** – "I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord…"



My God, My All

[Verse 1]
When You are near, all joy is mine,
My heart at rest, my soul aligned.
But when You hide, all things decay,
O Light of life, don't turn away.

[Chorus]
My God, my all—no more I seek,
Your presence fills the soul so deep.
You are the joy in all I see,
Without You, nothing comforts me.

[Verse 2]
The world may offer fleeting light,
But You alone make all things right.
I leave behind all lesser things,
To find the peace Your presence brings.

[Bridge]
Shine in the darkness of my soul,
Make every wounded corner whole.
Rise up, O Lord, subdue the war,
And be my peace forevermore.

[Final Chorus]
My God, my all—You're all I need,
In You alone my soul is freed.
All earthly praise I lift above,
To rest forever in Your love.

Chapter 35: That There Is No Security Against Temptation in This Life

1. "My child, you are never entirely safe in this life; your spiritual armor will always be necessary as long as you live. You dwell among enemies and are attacked from the right and the left. Unless you constantly use the shield of patience on every side, you will not remain long without wounds. Most of all, if your heart is not steadfastly fixed on Me with a firm purpose to endure all things for My sake, you will not be able to withstand the intensity of temptation or achieve the victory of the blessed. Therefore, you must fight bravely all your life and resist firmly whatever opposes you. To the one who overcomes, I will give the hidden manna,(1) but misery awaits the lazy and careless.

2. "If you seek rest in this life, how will you ever enter the eternal rest? Don't aim for comfort, but for endurance. Seek true peace—not on earth but in heaven, not in people or any created thing, but in Me alone. For love of God, you must willingly endure everything: labors and sorrows, temptations and frustrations, anxiety, need, weakness, injustice, contradiction, rebuke, humiliation, confusion, correction, and contempt. These things produce virtue; they are the tests of My disciples and prepare the crown of heaven. I will reward you with eternal joy for short suffering and infinite glory for passing shame.

3. "Do you expect constant spiritual comfort on demand? My saints never had such a life; instead, they experienced many afflictions, frequent temptations, and deep seasons of dryness. But they bore everything with patience and trusted more in Me than in themselves. They knew that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed. (2) Do you wish to have quickly what others only obtained through many tears and difficult labor? Wait for the Lord. Be brave. Be strong. Do not turn away from Me, but dedicate both body and soul to My glory. I will richly reward you. I will be with you in trouble."(3)

(1) Revelation 2:17.
(2) Romans 8:18.
(3) Psalm 91:15.

Additional Bible References

- **Ephesians 6:11** – "Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil."

- **James 1:12** – "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life…"

- **2 Corinthians 4:17** – "For our momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison."

- **Hebrews 12:11** – "All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterward it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness."

I Will Be With You in Trouble

[Verse 1]
When shadows fall and trials rise,
And hope seems buried in the skies,
Still I will lift my weary eyes—
You are my shield, my guiding light.

[Chorus]
I will be with You in trouble,
I will not walk away.
Even when the storm surrounds me,
Still I will sing and pray.
For the battle is not forever,
And the night will fade to day—
You are my help, my strong deliverer,
I will trust and obey.

[Verse 2]
The saints of old bore heavy loads,
They walked through fire on narrow roads.
They found You faithful, found You true,
And now I walk that path with You.

[Bridge]
Every sorrow, every pain,
Is planting seeds for greater gain.
What I suffer here below
Will be turned to joy I'll know.

[Final Chorus]
You will be with me in trouble,
You will not walk away.
Even when the storm surrounds me,
Still I will sing and pray.
For the crown is won in trial,
And the prize comes through the flame—
You are my strength, my sure Redeemer,
I will trust in Your name.

Chapter 36. Against Vain Judgments of Men

1. “My child, anchor your soul firmly in God, and don’t be afraid of what people think, especially when your conscience tells you that you are living with integrity and reverence. It is good—and even blessed—to suffer like this. A humble heart that trusts in God more than in itself will not find it burdensome. Many people have many opinions, and so it’s wise not to put too much weight on their judgments. You’ll never be able to please everyone. Even Paul tried to become all things to all people in the Lord, yet he said it meant very little to him to be judged by human opinion.”(1)

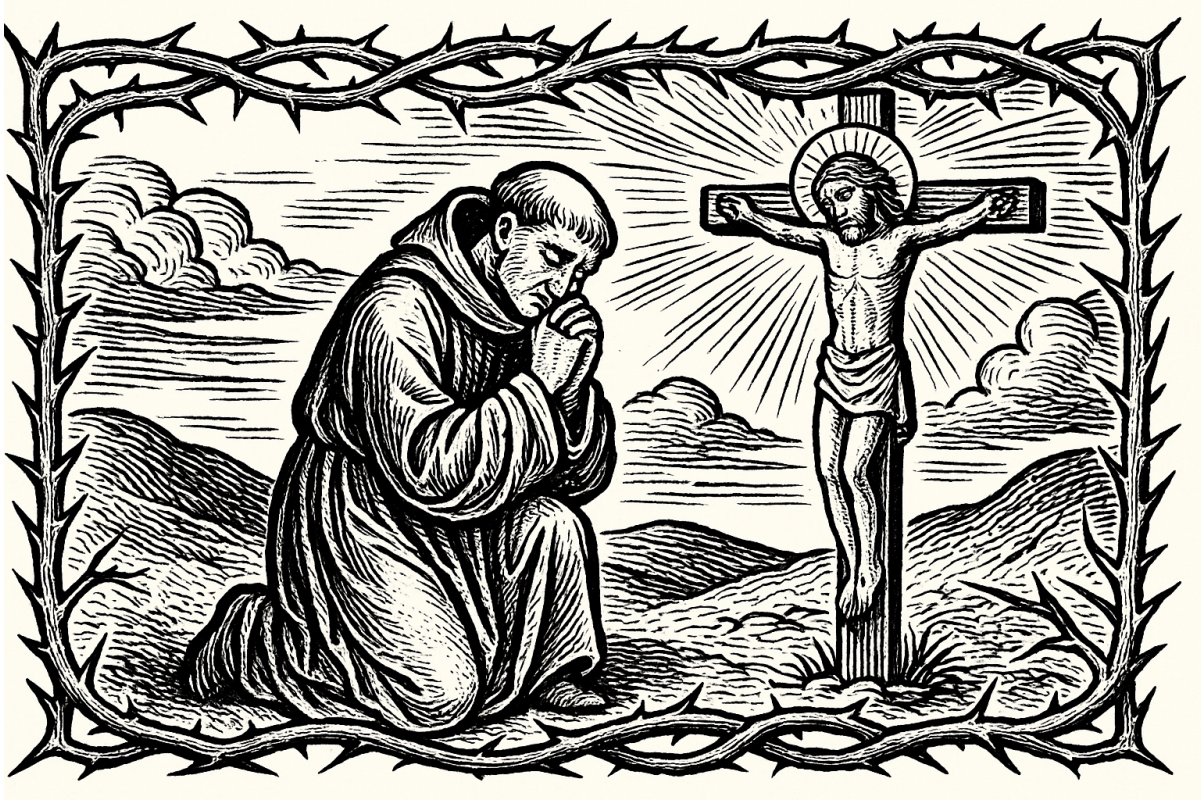
2. Paul worked hard to build others up and lead them to salvation, but he couldn’t prevent people from judging or criticizing him at times. So he entrusted everything to God, who sees and knows all. He stood firm against his critics with patience and humility—those who judged rashly or falsely accused him. Still, he offered a defense from time to time, so that his silence wouldn’t mislead those who were spiritually immature.

3. “Who are you to be afraid of someone who is just a mortal human being? Today they exist, and tomorrow they are gone. Fear God, and the opinions or threats of people won’t shake you. What can someone really do to harm you with their words or actions? In the end, they damage themselves more than they hurt you. And no matter who they are, they will not escape God’s judgment. Keep your eyes fixed on Me, and don’t argue over every accusation. If you must endure misunderstanding or embarrassment you don’t deserve, don’t get angry or impatient—that would only reduce your reward. Instead, lift your eyes to Me in heaven. I am the One who can rescue you from every false judgment and every injury, and I will repay each person according to their deeds.”

   (1) 1 Corinthians 9:22 (2) 1 Corinthians 4:3

Additional Bible References

- **Romans 14:4** – “Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls.”
- **Proverbs 29:25** – “The fear of man brings a snare, but one who trusts in the Lord will be protected.”
- **Isaiah 51:12** – “I, I Myself, am He who comforts you. Who are you that you are afraid of mortal man?”
- **Psalm 118:6** – “The Lord is for me; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”



My Defender and My Judge

[Verse 1]
They speak their words like sharpened blades
But You, O Lord, my soul have made
To stand when all around me fall
I hear Your voice above it all

[Chorus]
You're my Defender and my Judge
In You I place my hope and trust
I won’t be shaken, won’t retreat
Your mercy makes my heart complete

[Verse 2]
The world may mock, the world may scorn
But from their praise I am not torn
For You alone I seek to please
Your truth has set my spirit free

[Chorus]
You're my Defender and my Judge
In You I place my hope and trust
I won’t be shaken, won’t retreat
Your mercy makes my heart complete

[Bridge]
Though silence may be all I give
You see the heart in how I live
Your justice flows like rivers wide
I will not fear with You beside

[Final Chorus]
You're my Defender and my Judge
In You I place my hope and trust
I won’t be shaken, won’t retreat
Your mercy makes my heart complete

Chapter 37. Of Pure and Entire Resignation of Self, for the Obtaining Liberty of Heart

1. "My child, lose yourself, and you will find Me. Be still—without self-will or selfish desires—and you will always gain. The more you let go of yourself, the more grace will be given to you."

2. Lord, how often must I surrender myself, and in what ways must I let go?

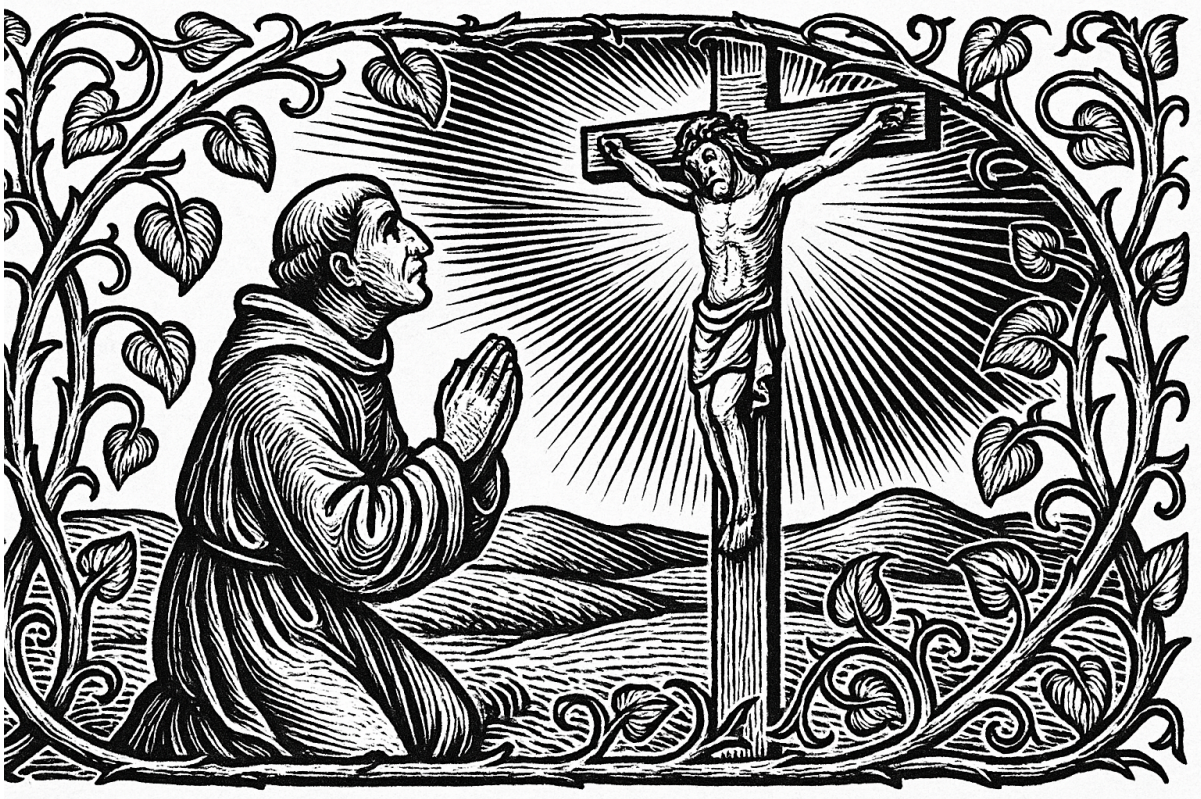
3. "Always—hour by hour. In small things and in great. I make no exceptions: I want you entirely empty of self, inside and out. How can you belong fully to Me, and I to you, if your will still clings to anything? The sooner you yield, the better it will go for you. The more completely and sincerely you surrender, the more you will please Me, and the more richly you will be rewarded.

4. "Some people give themselves, but with hidden strings attached, because they do not fully trust Me. So they make backup plans for themselves. Others start by offering everything, but later, under pressure or temptation, they take back control and make their own way again. Such people make no progress in spiritual growth. They cannot experience the full freedom of a pure heart or the joy of walking closely with Me—because true union with Me, which bears real fruit, requires daily sacrifice and total surrender.

5. "I've told you before, and I tell you again: give yourself up, and you will find deep inner peace. Give all for all. Don't demand, don't bargain. Stand in Me alone, without hesitation, and you will possess Me. You will have freedom of heart, and darkness will not overcome you. Strive for this. Pray for it. Long for it: to be free from self-possession and to follow Me with nothing held back. Die to yourself, so that you may live forever in Me. Then all vain imaginations will vanish, all inner turmoil will cease, and excessive fear and misplaced love will lose their grip."

Additional Bible References

- **Matthew 16:24** – "If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me."
- **Romans 12:1** – "Present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."
- **Philippians 3:8** – "I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."
- **Galatians 2:20** – "It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me."
- **Luke 14:33** – "None of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions."



All for All

[Verse 1]
I lay it down, my heart, my pride
The restless schemes I used to guide
I give them up, my hands now free
To cling to You who rescued me

[Chorus]
All for all, no bargain made
No hidden plans, no deal delayed
My life, my love, I yield complete
To follow You with steady feet

[Verse 2]
The path is narrow, thorns may grow
But in Your will, my soul will glow
Though comforts fade and fears arise
Your peace alone my heart supplies

[Bridge]
No turning back, no self to claim
Just joy and fire in Jesus' name
What once I loved, I count as loss
To gain the glory of the cross

[Chorus]
All for all, no bargain made
No hidden plans, no deal delayed
My life, my love, I yield complete
To follow You with steady feet

Chapter 38. On Proper Management of External Affairs and Turning to God in Times of Danger

1. “My child, this must be your diligent aim: that in every place, in every external task or responsibility, you remain inwardly free and in control of yourself. All things should be subject to you—not you to them. Be master of your actions, not a slave or a mere hireling, but a free and true child of God. Enter into the inheritance and liberty of God's people, who live above the present moment and fix their eyes on eternity. They look upon passing things with one eye, and heavenly things with the other. Temporal matters do not bind them in affection, but are used for good, as God intended and the Master Creator purposed in all His works.”

2. “If, in any circumstance of life, you do not remain fixed on what is outward or judge by appearances or by what your senses perceive, but instead, like Moses, you go straight into the tabernacle to seek My counsel, you will hear My word and come out with understanding for both the present and the future. Moses continually sought the tabernacle to resolve doubts and questions, and he relied on prayer to be delivered from the threats and evil of men. You must do the same—flee to the hidden place of your heart and seek My help earnestly in prayer. That is why it is written that Joshua and the Israelites were deceived by the Gibeonites—because they did not seek counsel from Me, but listened instead to flattery, and were misled by a show of godliness.”(1)

   Joshua 9:14

Additional Bible References

- **Proverbs 3:5-6** – "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."
- **James 1:5** – "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him."
- **Psalm 32:8** – "I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will advise you with My eye upon you."
- **Isaiah 30:21** – "Your ears will hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the way, walk in it,’ whenever you turn to the right or to the left."
- **Colossians 3:2** – "Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth.”

Into the Tabernacle

[Verse 1]
When the world cries out with voices loud,
And I feel pressed beneath the crowd,
I turn aside, I shut the door,
And seek Your counsel, Lord, once more.

[Chorus]
Into the tabernacle deep,
Where hidden truths and mercies sleep,
I bring my doubts, my questions there,
And find Your wisdom in my prayer.

[Verse 2]
The world displays its clever schemes,
And speaks in pious-sounding dreams,
But I will wait on what You say,
Not chase illusions in my way.

[Chorus]
Into the tabernacle deep,
Where hidden truths and mercies sleep,
I bring my doubts, my questions there,
And find Your wisdom in my prayer.

[Bridge]
Not ruled by gold or fleeting pride,
Nor shaken by the shifting tide,
In every task, in every place,
I lean upon Your guiding grace.

[Final Chorus]
Into the tabernacle deep,
Your voice alone my soul will keep,
Though all the world may shout and stare,
I'll find my peace in whispered prayer.

Chapter 39. That We Must Not Be Consumed by Business

1. "My child, always commit your cause to Me. I will handle it rightly in due time. Wait for My direction, and you will find it works out for your good."

2. O Lord, I freely commit all things to You, for my own planning accomplishes little. Oh, that I would not dwell so much on the future, but offer myself fully to Your will without delay!

3. "My child, people often pursue something with great intensity when they desire it, but once they attain it, their feelings change. Their affections are unstable and shift easily from one thing to another. That's why it is no small matter when someone learns to resist themselves even in small things."

4. True spiritual progress lies in self-denial; the person who denies themselves is free and safe. But the old enemy, the opposer of all good, never stops tempting. Day and night he lays traps, hoping to ensnare the unwary. 'Watch and pray,' says the Lord, 'so that you do not enter into temptation.'(1)

   (1) Matthew 26:41

Additional Bible References

- **Proverbs 16:3** – "Commit your works to the Lord, and your plans will be established."
- **Psalm 37:5** – "Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will do it."
- **Luke 10:41-42** – "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; but only one thing is necessary."
- **1 Peter 5:7** – "Having cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares about you."
- **Philippians 4:6** – "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and pleading with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

Wait and Let Me Lead

[Verse 1]
So many plans run through my mind,
I chase ahead, I lag behind.
But You, O Lord, are always near—
You whisper peace when doubt draws near.

[Chorus]
Wait and let Me lead you on,
Through every dusk and every dawn.
Lay your burdens at My feet,
And find in Me a rest complete.

[Verse 2]
I strive, I build, I reach, I fall,
Yet none of this will matter at all
Unless I trust and yield my way,
And seek Your presence every day.

[Chorus]
Wait and let Me lead you on,
Through every dusk and every dawn.
Lay your burdens at My feet,
And find in Me a rest complete.

[Bridge]
The world may press with urgent cares,
But I will lift them through My prayers.
No snare shall hold, no fear shall stay,
When I walk humbly in Your way.

[Final Chorus]
Wait and let Me lead you on,
I'll guide until the race is done.
Give your heart, your work, your need—
And I will lead, and I will lead.

Chapter 40. That Man Has No Good in Himself, and Nothing to Boast About

1. Lord, what is man, that You are mindful of him, or the son of man, that You care for him? (1) What has man done to deserve Your favor? Lord, what right do I have to complain if You abandon me? What can I say in defense if You don't answer my prayers? Honestly, I can say this with certainty: Lord, I am nothing. I have nothing good of my own. I fall short in everything and constantly tend toward nothingness. Unless You help and uphold me from within, I grow cold and careless.

2. But You, O Lord, are always the same and endure forever. You are always good, righteous, and holy—doing all things well and everything wisely. But I, who am more prone to drift than to stand firm, never remain steady. Change after change sweeps over me. Yet things quickly improve when it pleases You to act and stretch out Your hand to help, for You alone can strengthen me without any human aid. You alone can make me stand firm so that my heart is fixed on You and finds its rest in You.

3. If only I truly knew how to turn away from all human consolations—whether to gain spiritual devotion or simply out of desperation—then I could truly rely on Your grace and find joy in the fresh comfort You give.

4. Thanks be to You, from whom every good thing flows, whenever things go well with me! But in myself I am nothing—unsteady, vain, and weak. Why then should I seek glory or crave human praise? Isn't it all meaningless? Indeed, it is utterly empty. Vain glory is a deadly plague, the worst of vanities, because it pulls us away from true glory and robs us of heavenly grace. While a man is pleasing himself, he displeases You. While he's chasing praise, he loses true virtue.

5. True glory and holy joy lie in boasting in You, not in ourselves—in rejoicing in Your name, not in our own accomplishments. We should delight in no created thing except for Your sake. Let Your name, not mine, be praised. Let Your work, not mine, be magnified. Let Your holy name be honored, and let me receive nothing of human applause. You are my glory and the joy of my heart. I will boast in You and rejoice in You all day long. But for myself, let me only boast in my weaknesses. (2)

6. Let others seek honor from one another as the Jews did, but I will seek the glory that comes from You alone. (3) All human praise, earthly honor, and worldly pride are meaningless and foolish compared to Your eternal glory. O God—my Truth and my Mercy—Blessed Trinity, to You alone be all praise, honor, power, and glory forever and ever. Amen.

   (1) Psalm 8:4 (2) 2 Corinthians 12:5 (3) John 5:44

Additional Bible References

- **Isaiah 64:6** – "For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment."
- **Romans 3:10** – "There is no righteous person, not even one."
- **Galatians 6:14** – "But far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."
- **Psalm 115:1** – "Not to us, Lord, not to us, but to Your name give glory."
- **1 Corinthians 1:31** – "So that, just as it is written: 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.'"

You Alone Are My Glory

[Verse 1]
Who am I that You would see me,
Dust and breath that fades away?
Yet You reach with grace to free me,
Shining mercy on my way.

[Chorus]
You alone are my glory,
My strength, my joy, my crown.
All I am tells the story
Of grace that draws me down—
Down to bow and lift Your name,
Not my honor, not my fame.

[Verse 2]
When I chase the world's approval,
When I seek to stand out tall,
Strip away my prideful striving—
Let me see I'm weak and small.

[Chorus]
You alone are my glory,
My strength, my joy, my crown.
All I am tells the story
Of grace that draws me down—
Down to bow and lift Your name,
Not my honor, not my fame.

[Bridge]
Let my heart rejoice in weakness,
Let my soul make You its boast.
For in every empty moment,
It is You I need the most.

[Final Chorus]
You alone are my glory,
Forever lift my eyes.
Take this fleeting shadowed story—
Make it sing what never dies.
All my hope, my song, my claim:
Jesus Christ—my only name.

Chapter 41. On Contempt for All Earthly Honor

1. "My child, don't concern yourself when you see others honored and lifted up while you are overlooked or put down. Lift your heart to Me in heaven, and the scorn or neglect of people on earth won't weigh you down."

2. Lord, how blind we are! How easily we fall into the trap of vanity. If I examine myself honestly, no one has ever truly wronged me, and I have no reason to complain before You. I have sinned against You many times and in profound ways—so it is only right that all creation stand against me. Shame and rejection are what I truly deserve, but all praise, honor, and glory belong to You.

   Unless I accept this—that I should be willing for every person to ignore, reject, and even despise me, and that I be seen as nothing—I will never find true inner peace or strength. I will not be enlightened in spirit, nor can I be fully united with You.

Additional Bible References

- **Philippians 2:5–7** – "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus… He emptied Himself by taking the form of a bond-servant."
- **Isaiah 53:3** – "He was despised and abandoned by men… and we did not esteem Him."
- **1 Corinthians 4:10** – "We are fools on account of Christ… we have become like the scum of the world."
- **James 4:10** – "Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you."
- **Matthew 5:11–12** – "Blessed are you when people insult you… Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is in heaven."

All for Your Glory

[Verse 1]
I won't chase the world's applause,
Or strive for fleeting praise.
Let me walk the lowly path,
And lift Your name always.

[Chorus]
All for Your glory, none for mine,
I lay my honor down.
Let me be low, that You may shine,
And wear the victor's crown.

[Verse 2]
Though others rise and I stay small,
Let not my heart be sore.
The one who bows before the King
Will lack for nothing more.

[Chorus]
All for Your glory, none for mine,
I lay my honor down.
Let me be low, that You may shine,
And wear the victor's crown.

[Bridge]
Esteemed by men? Let it pass.
Despised and still, I'll sing—
That in the silence of the shame,
You are my everything.

[Final Chorus]
All for Your glory, none for mine,
My joy is found in Thee.
To be forgotten in this life
Is gain eternally.

Chapter 42. That Our Peace Must Not Depend on People

1. "My child, if your peace is based on a particular person—because you think highly of them or enjoy their company—then you will be unstable and easily disappointed. But if you turn instead to the living and eternal Truth, then even the loss or death of a friend won't shake you.

   Let your love for any friend be rooted in Me, and love every person for My sake—especially those who seem good and dear to you in this life. Apart from Me, no friendship has true strength or permanence. Any love I have not formed and united is not real or pure.

   You should be so detached from your affections—even from your closest companions—that you would rather do without human relationships entirely if it were up to you. The closer someone draws to God, the more they move away from worldly comforts. The more deeply someone looks within and sees their own lowliness, the higher they are raised toward God."

2. "But anyone who credits themselves with something good blocks the flow of My grace. The Holy Spirit always looks for the humble heart. If you could make yourself nothing—truly empty of attachment to created things—then My grace would flood your soul.

   When you fix your gaze on created things, you lose sight of the Creator's face. So, learn to deny yourself in all things for My sake. That is the path to heavenly understanding. Even the smallest thing, if loved in the wrong way, will hold you back from the highest good and lead to spiritual corruption."

Additional Bible References

- **Jeremiah 17:5** – "Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the Lord."
- **Psalm 73:25** – "Whom do I have in heaven but You? And with You, I desire nothing on earth."
- **John 15:4** – "Remain in Me, and I in you… apart from Me you can do nothing."
- **James 4:6** – "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."
- **Colossians 3:2** – "Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth."

Only You, My Peace

[Verse 1]
I trusted in people, in voices and hands,
But they faded like waves on the shore.
Now I lift up my heart, and I finally understand—
You alone are the peace I long for.

[Chorus]
Only You, my peace, my rest,
My joy that never fails the test.
In every loss, in every friend,
You're the beginning, You're the end.
Only You, my peace.

[Verse 2]
I thought I could stand with the strength of my pride,
But Your Spirit looks only for the low.
Now I lay down my will, and the world set aside,
Letting go so Your rivers may flow.

[Chorus]
Only You, my peace, my rest,
My joy that never fails the test.
In every loss, in every friend,
You're the beginning, You're the end.
Only You, my peace.

[Bridge]
Strip away all that's not from You,
Whether mercy, joy or pain.
No lesser love can see me through—
Let nothing else remain.

[Final Chorus]
Only You, my peace, my rest,
The stillness deep within my chest.
Though all may go, You never cease—
Forever You will be my peace.
Only You, my peace.

Chapter 43. Against Vain and Worldly Knowledge

1. “My child, don’t let the clever and polished words of people influence you. The Kingdom of God is not about talk, but about power. (1) Listen to My words—they set your heart on fire, bring light to your mind, lead you to repentance, and give deep comfort. Don’t read just to look smart or impress others; study to humble yourself and commit your sins to death. That will benefit you far more than mastering difficult theories.

2. “Even if you read and learn many things, you must always return to one foundational truth: I am the One who teaches people knowledge, (2) and I give more light to the humble than any human teacher can. Whoever hears My voice becomes truly wise and grows quickly in spirit. But woe to those who chase after complex discussions from others while ignoring the way of serving Me. The day will come when Christ appears—the true Master, the Lord of Angels—to examine every heart and conscience. Then He will search Jerusalem with lamps, (3) revealing what was hidden in the dark, (4) and human arguments will be silenced.

3. “I am the One who, in an instant, lifts up a humble soul to understand more of eternal truth than someone could learn in ten years at school. I teach without noisy words, without confusion, without pride or debating. I teach people to let go of earthly things, to hate what is temporary, to seek the things of heaven, to delight in what is eternal, to reject praise, to endure criticism, to place their hope in Me alone, and above all, to love Me with passion.

4. “There was one who, because he loved Me deeply, learned divine wisdom and spoke with great insight. He gained more by giving up everything than by studying complicated ideas. To some, I speak in everyday ways, to others in special revelations. I use signs and images with some, and I reveal mysteries in full clarity to others. The words in books are the same, but not everyone learns the same from them, because I am the One who teaches inwardly—the Teacher of truth, the One who sees the heart, understands thoughts, moves people to act, and gives each one what is fitting.”

(1) 1 Corinthians 4:20.
(2) Psalm 94:10.
(3) Zephaniah 1:12.
(4) 1 Corinthians 4:5.

Additional Bible References

- **John 14:26** – "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit... will teach you all things, and remind you of all that I said to you."

- **James 3:17** – "But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peace-loving, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits..."
- **Proverbs 1:7** – "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction."
- **Ecclesiastes 12:12** – "But beyond this, my son, be warned: the writing of many books is endless, and excessive study is exhausting to the body."

More Than Words

[Verse 1]
I don't need wisdom that flatters the ear
Or phrases that sparkle but leave my soul bare
Give me the truth that cuts like a sword
That draws me in closer, O Christ, my Lord

[Chorus]
You are the Teacher my soul longs to find
Your whisper brings light that renews my mind
In stillness You speak and awaken my flame
More than the words—You call me by name

[Verse 2]
I've chased after knowledge, but found it was vain
When not rooted in mercy, it leads back to pain
But You lift the humble and guide them to see
The joy of surrender, the riches of Thee

[Chorus]
You are the Teacher my soul longs to find
Your whisper brings light that renews my mind
In stillness You speak and awaken my flame
More than the words—You call me by name

[Bridge]
I lay down the need to be clever or known
And choose Your instruction, Your voice alone
I trade all my pride for the truth You reveal
It wounds and it heals, it burns and it seals

[Final Chorus]
You are the Teacher my soul longs to find
Your whisper brings light that renews my mind
In stillness You speak and awaken my flame
More than the words—You call me by name

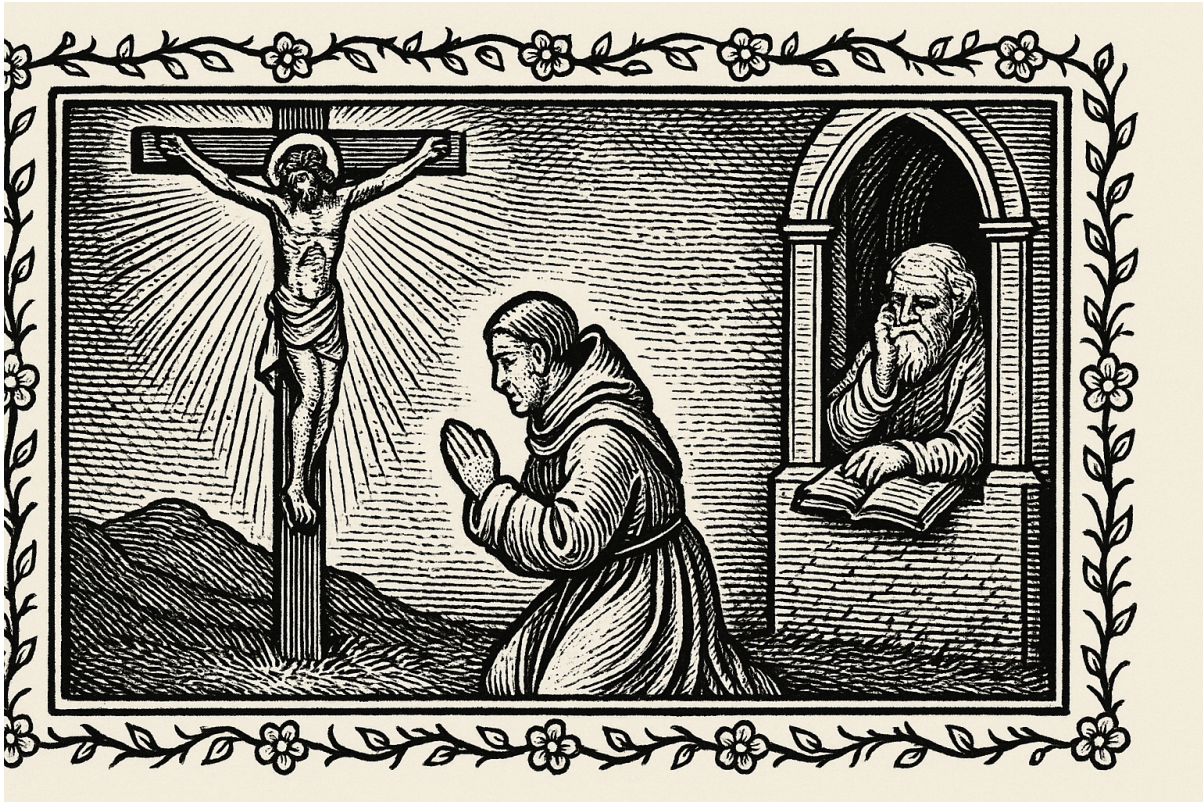
Chapter 44. Of Not Troubling Ourselves About Outward Things

1. “My child, in many matters it is good for you to remain unaware and to consider yourself as one dead to the world, with the world crucified to you. You must also learn to ignore many things and give them no weight, and instead reflect on what makes for your inner peace. It is more helpful to turn your eyes away from things that annoy you and let others hold their own opinions than to engage in disputes and arguments. If you are at peace with God and mindful of His judgment, you will easily bear being seen as defeated by others.”

2. Lord, what have we come to? We grieve over temporary losses; we rush and toil for small gains; yet we allow spiritual loss to slip by and seldom regain it. We chase after things that matter little or not at all, and neglect what is truly necessary—because our whole being tends to drift toward outward things. And unless we quickly come back to ourselves, we gladly remain there.

Additional Bible References

- **Galatians 6:14** – "But far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."
- **Colossians 3:2** – "Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth."
- **Proverbs 4:23** – "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life."
- **Isaiah 26:3** – "The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in You."
- **Ecclesiastes 1:14** – "I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all is futility and striving after wind."



All for Peace

[Verse 1]
Let the world say what it pleases,
Let it judge and pass me by,
I'll be still in Your assurance,
Lift my eyes beyond the sky.

[Chorus]
All for peace, my soul shall rest,
Not in gain, but what is best.
Though the world may fall apart,
You will still guard my heart.

[Verse 2]
Every noise and vain distraction,
I will turn my ear away.
You are peace in all the chaos,
You are calm in disarray.

[Chorus]
All for peace, my soul shall rest,
Not in gain, but what is best.
Though the world may fall apart,
You will still guard my heart.

[Bridge]
Help me treasure what You treasure,
Set my thoughts on things above.
Let me count the world as nothing
When compared to Your great love.

[Chorus]
All for peace, my soul shall rest,
Not in gain, but what is best.
Though the world may fall apart,
You will still guard my heart.

Chapter 45. That We Must Not Believe Everyone, and That We Are Prone to Fall in Our Words

1. Lord, be my help in trouble, for the help of man is worthless. How often have I looked for faithfulness and found none, and how often have I found it where I least expected? Therefore, trusting in people is vain, but the salvation of the righteous is in You, O God. Blessed are You, Lord my God, in everything that happens to us. We are weak and unsteady, easily deceived and quick to change.

2. Who can keep themselves so guarded that they never stumble into confusion? But the one who trusts in You, Lord, and seeks You with a sincere heart, will not easily fall. And even if they enter into trouble, no matter how entangled they become, they will soon be rescued or comforted by You—because You do not abandon those who trust in You to the end. A faithful friend in life's troubles is rare, but You, Lord, are always steadfast in everything. There is no one like You.

3. How truly wise was that holy soul who said, "My mind is firmly set, and it is grounded in Christ." If only this were true of me, I would not so easily be shaken by fear of man, nor would I be disturbed by hurtful words. Who can foresee all things or guard against every harm? Even when we see trouble coming, we can still be hurt—how much more when it's unexpected! Why did I not better prepare myself? Why did I put so much confidence in others? We are only human—frail and mortal—even if people think of us as angels. Whom can I trust, Lord, but You? You are the Truth, and You never deceive, nor can You be deceived. But every person is a liar—unstable and weak—especially in their speech, so we should be slow to believe anything just because it sounds right.

4. How wisely You have warned us to be cautious of people, that a person's enemies may come from their own household, and that we should not believe those who say, "Look here," or "Look there." I have learned from my losses—may I now be wiser and more careful. Someone says, "Be careful, don't tell anyone what I've told you," while I remain silent, believing their secret is safe with me, they expose it themselves. Protect me, Lord, from such careless and harmful people. Let me not fall into their ways, nor be like them. Give me a truthful and steadfast tongue, and remove deceit from my lips. What I would not want done to me, I should never do to others.

5. It is good to stay silent about others, not to believe every rumor, or to spread it. It is better to confide in few, to live always with You as the witness of my heart, and not to be swayed by every whisper. Let all things—inside and out—be done according to Your will. How much grace is preserved when we turn from human approval and do not seek public praise, but instead pursue inner transformation and spiritual passion! How many have been harmed by being praised too quickly! But how rich is the blessing of grace quietly kept, especially in this fragile life full of temptation and spiritual warfare.

(1) Psalm 60:11 (2) St. Agatha. (3) Psalm 116:11; Romans 3:4 (4) Matthew 10:17, 36 (5) Matthew 24:23

Additional Bible References

- **Proverbs 29:25** – "The fear of man brings a snare, but one who trusts in the Lord will be protected."
- **Jeremiah 17:5** – "Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the Lord."
- **Psalm 118:8** – "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man."
- **James 1:26** – "If anyone thinks that he is religious, yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this person's religion is worthless."
- **Ephesians 4:29** – "Let no unwholesome word come out of your mouth, but if there is any good word for edification according to the need of the moment, say that, so that it will give grace to those who hear."

The Tongue and the Truth

[Verse 1]
I trusted the words, I trusted the face,
But people can fail in the dearest place.
O Lord, You alone are faithful and true,
So now I will fix all my hope upon You.

[Chorus]
Keep my words and guard my way,
Teach me what to do and say.
Let me trust in none but You—
For only You are always true.

[Verse 2]
They said they'd be silent, they said they'd be kind,
But soon came the gossip that troubled my mind.
Let me not repay or speak in haste,
But rest in Your truth and walk in Your grace.

[Chorus]
Keep my words and guard my way,
Teach me what to do and say.
Let me trust in none but You—
For only You are always true.

[Bridge]
From whispers and flattery, shield me with care,
From seeking man’s praise in the open air.
May silence be wisdom and peace my guide,
With Your Spirit alone dwelling deep inside.

[Chorus]
Keep my words and guard my way,
Teach me what to do and say.
Let me trust in none but You—
For only You are always true.

Chapter 46. Of Having Confidence in God When Evil Words Are Cast at Us

1. “My child, stand firm and trust in Me. What are words but mere sounds? They fly through the air but cannot strike a stone. If you are truly guilty, receive correction and be eager to change. But if your conscience accuses you of nothing, then be glad to bear this for My sake. It is a small thing to endure harsh words, since you cannot yet endure harsh blows. Why then do such petty things upset you—unless your heart is still fleshly, and you care too much about people's opinions? You fear being despised and resist correction, hiding behind shallow excuses.

2. “Look deeper within, and you will see the world still has a grip on you—especially the vain desire to be liked by others. If you shrink from being humbled and exposed for your faults, it’s clear that you are not truly humble or dead to the world, and that the world is not crucified to you. But listen to My voice, and you will not fear ten thousand insults. Even if everything malicious that could be said were spoken against you, what harm would it do if you counted it as nothing—like a speck of dust? Could it even pull out a single hair from your head?

3. “One who has no strength of heart, who does not keep Me in view, is easily shaken by rebuke. But whoever trusts in Me, and does not cling to their own opinion, will be free from the fear of people. I am the Judge and the Knower of all secrets. I know how things truly happened. I know both the one who spoke and the one who endured. The word came from Me; by My permission it happened—so that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed. I will judge both the guilty and the innocent, but before that, I test them both through hidden means.

4. “People’s judgment is often wrong. Mine is true; it stands firm and cannot be overturned. It is often hidden, revealed only in part and to few, but it never errs, though it may seem unjust to the foolish. Therefore, you must bring all your concerns to Me in prayer and not lean on your own understanding. No real harm will come to the righteous, no matter what I allow to happen. If false charges are made, he won’t be disturbed. If he is vindicated, he won’t boast. He knows that I search the heart and mind and do not judge by appearance. What people praise may be condemned in My sight.”

5. O Lord, righteous Judge, strong and patient—You know the weakness and sinfulness of men. Be my strength and confidence, for my own conscience cannot fully comfort me. You know things I do not. So under every accusation, I must learn to humble myself and respond with gentleness. Forgive me for every time I have failed to do this, and give me the grace to endure with greater patience in the future. Your mercy is more valuable to me than my own sense of innocence, for if Your mercy were removed, no one could stand justified before You.

(1) Luke 2:35 (2) Proverbs 12:21 (3) Psalm 7:9 (4) 1 Corinthians 4:4 (5) Psalm 143:2

Additional Bible References

- **Romans 12:19** – "Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written: 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord."
- **1 Peter 2:23** – "And while being abusively insulted, He did not insult in return; while suffering, He did not threaten, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously."
- **Isaiah 50:7** – "For the Lord God helps Me, therefore I am not disgraced; therefore I have made My face like flint, and I know that I will not be ashamed."
- **James 1:19-20** – "Everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger; for a man's anger does not bring about the righteousness of God."
- **Ecclesiastes 7:21-22** – "Also, do not take seriously all the words which are spoken, so that you do not hear your servant cursing you; for you know that even you have cursed others many times."

The Words Will Not Destroy Me

[Verse 1]
Words like arrows pierce the air,
But I will not be moved by fear.
You are my shield, You know the truth,
Your voice, O Lord, will see me through.

[Chorus]
The words will not destroy me,
Your judgment is my stay.
Though people may accuse me,
You will not turn away.
I rest beneath Your mercy,
More faithful than my sight—
The words may swirl around me,
But You declare me right.

[Verse 2]
If guilt is mine, then cleanse me, Lord,
And give me grace to be restored.
But if I stand with conscience clear,
Then let me walk and never fear.

[Chorus]
The words will not destroy me,
Your judgment is my stay.
Though people may accuse me,
You will not turn away.
I rest beneath Your mercy,
More faithful than my sight—
The words may swirl around me,
But You declare me right.

[Bridge]
I do not lean on praise of men,
Or crumble when they fall—
For You, O Lord, are just and true,
The only Judge of all.

[Chorus]
The words will not destroy me,
Your judgment is my stay.
Though people may accuse me,
You will not turn away.
I rest beneath Your mercy,
More faithful than my sight—
The words may swirl around me,
But You declare me right.

Chapter 47. That All Troubles Are to Be Endured for the Sake of Eternal Life

1. "My child, don't let the work you've taken on for My sake wear you down, and don't let suffering discourage you. Let My promises be your strength and comfort in everything. I am more than enough to reward you—beyond what you can imagine. You won't labor forever, nor will sorrow always weigh you down. Wait just a little longer, and you'll see your hardships come to an end. All that belongs to this passing world is short and temporary.

2. "Be diligent in what you're doing; serve faithfully in My vineyard, and I will be your reward. Write, read, sing, weep, be silent, pray, endure hardship with courage—eternal life is worth all this and more. One day, peace will come—a day only the Lord knows. It will not be divided into night and day, but will be eternal light, everlasting clarity, unshakable peace, and perfect rest. Then you will no longer say, *'Who will rescue me from this body of death?'* Nor cry out, *'Woe is me, for my journey is so long!'* For death will be completely destroyed, and you will receive salvation that can never be lost, full of joy and the fellowship of saints.

3. "Oh, if you could see the crowns of the saints in heaven, unfading and glorious, and the joy they now experience—those who were once scorned by the world as if unworthy to live—you would fall humbly to the ground. You would rather serve everyone than rule over even one. You wouldn't seek the comforts of this life, but would rejoice in being afflicted for God's sake. You would see it as a gain to be overlooked by others.

4. "If these truths truly touched your heart and stirred your soul, how could you ever complain again? Isn't eternal life worth all hardship? Nothing is greater than the loss or gain of the Kingdom of God. So lift your eyes to heaven. Look—here I am with all My saints, those who endured trials in this world. We now rejoice, comforted, safe, and at peace—and we will remain with My Father forever."

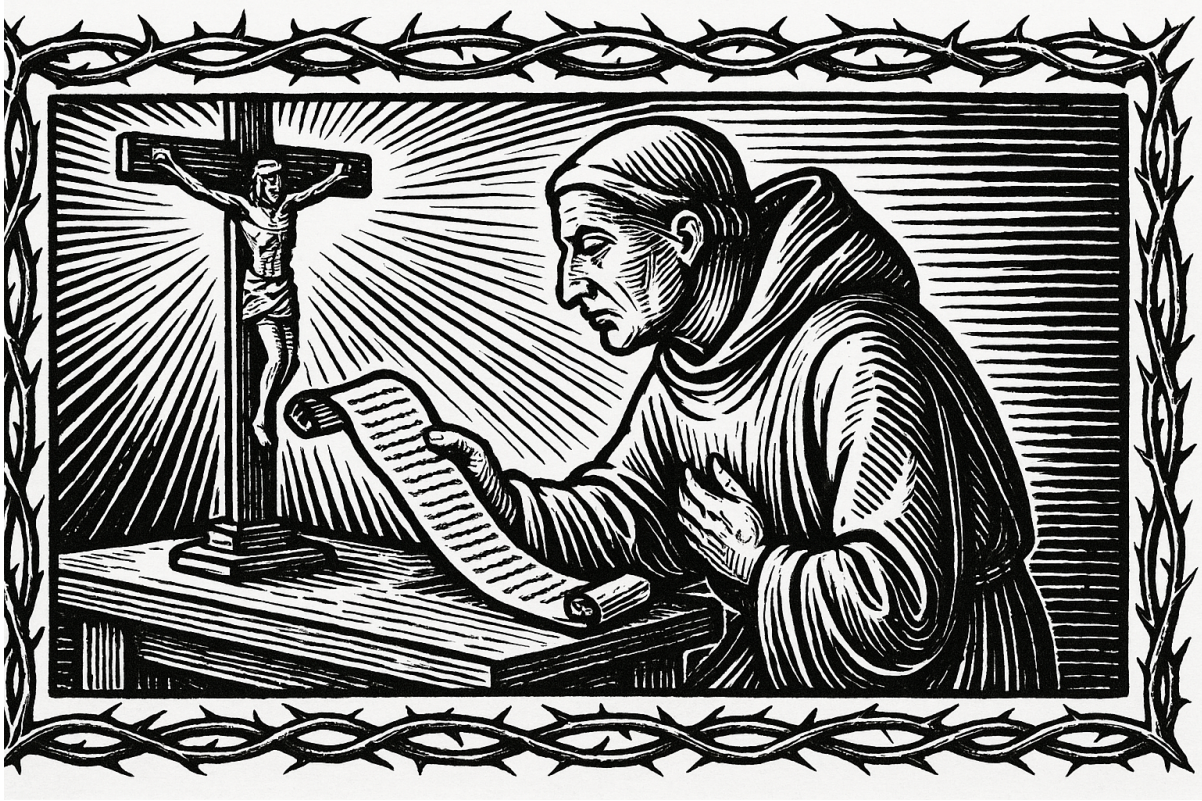
(1) Zechariah 14:7 (2) Romans 7:24 (3) Psalm 120

Additional Bible References

- **Romans 8:18** – "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."
- **2 Corinthians 4:17** – "For our momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison."
- **Revelation 7:16-17** – "They will no longer hunger nor thirst... and God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

- **Hebrews 12:2** – "Fixing our eyes on Jesus... who, for the joy set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame."

- **James 1:12** – "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life."



Hold On for the Crown

[Verse 1]
Hold on, weary soul, the dawn will rise,
Beyond the shadows, above the skies.
The path is steep, the night is long,
But heaven waits with victory's song.

[Chorus]
Lift your eyes and fix your gaze,
On the King of endless days.
All you suffer, all you bear,
Cannot compare with glory there.
So hold on, child, the crown is near,
Your Savior's voice is drawing near.

[Verse 2]
When burdens weigh and hearts grow weak,
And all around seems harsh and bleak,
Remember Christ endured the flame,
And through your loss, He knows your name.

[Chorus]
Lift your eyes and fix your gaze,
On the King of endless days.
All you suffer, all you bear,
Cannot compare with glory there.
So hold on, child, the crown is near,
Your Savior's voice is drawing near.

[Bridge]
If you could see the saints above,
Their joy, their rest, their songs of love,
You'd count it joy to share their pain,
To die with Christ, and rise again.

[Final Chorus]
Lift your eyes and fix your gaze,
On the King of endless days.
All you suffer, all you bear,
Cannot compare with glory there.
So hold on, child, the crown is near,
Eternal light will soon appear.

Chapter 48. Of the Day of Eternity and the Hardships of This Life

1. Oh, most blessed home in the heavenly City above! Oh, bright day of eternity that is never darkened by night, always lit by the Light of God's truth! A day full of joy, completely secure, never changing into sorrow. Oh, that this day would break forth and all these temporary things would come to an end! That day already shines upon the saints, glowing with unending light, though we who still journey on earth see it only from afar, as through a cloudy window.

2. The citizens of heaven know how glorious that day is. But the exiled children of Eve groan, for life here is bitter and burdensome. Our days are few and full of trouble—stained by sin, ruled by passion, burdened by fear, weighed down with anxiety and confusion. We are caught up in vanity, misled by error, worn out by toil, tested by temptation, weakened by pleasure, and often crushed by poverty.

3. When, O Lord, will these troubles end? When will I be freed from the miserable slavery of sin? When will my thoughts be fixed on You alone? When will I rejoice fully in You? When will I be truly free from every burden in body and mind? When will there be lasting peace—unshakable, inside and out, all around? Dearest Jesus, when will I behold You? When will I see the glory of Your Kingdom? When will You be all in all to me? When will I dwell with You in the Kingdom You prepared from the beginning for those who love You? I am left here, a stranger in a broken world, surrounded by daily battles and profound sorrow.

4. Comfort me in this exile, soften the weight of my suffering, for all my desire is directed toward You. Everything this world offers for comfort feels heavy and empty. I long to know You intimately but can't yet attain it. I want to cling to what is above, but earthly desires and undisciplined passions drag me down. In my mind, I want to rise above all things, but my flesh keeps pulling me beneath them. So I find myself at war within—torn between the spirit that reaches upward and the flesh that clings to the earth.

5. How deeply I suffer inside, even as I think on heavenly things! But when I pray, earthly distractions flood my mind. My God, don't be far from me. Don't turn away from Your servant in anger. Send out Your lightning—scatter the lies! Shoot forth Your arrows and defeat every deception of the enemy. Bring my thoughts back to You; make me forget all worthless things. Help me to throw away sinful imaginations quickly. O Eternal Truth, strengthen me so that no vanity can sway me. Come near, O Heavenly Sweetness, and let all impurity vanish before You. And when I'm distracted in prayer, have mercy and deal kindly with me, for I confess that my thoughts often wander. My body may be in one place, but my thoughts are elsewhere—drawn to what I love. And where my thoughts go, there my heart is.

6. That's why You, the Truth, have said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." If I love heaven, I'll gladly think about heavenly things. If I love the world, I'll chase after its joys and feel crushed by its troubles. If I love the flesh, I'll be consumed with fleshly desires. But if I love the Spirit, I'll find joy in spiritual

meditation. Whatever I love, that's what fills my thoughts and guides my ears and my heart.

But blessed is the one who, for Your sake, is willing to part from all created things; who denies the desires of the flesh and puts them to death by the fire of the Spirit—so that with a clear conscience, they may offer up pure prayers to You and be found worthy to join the company of angels, shutting out all worldly distractions both inwardly and outwardly.

(1) Psalm 71:12 (2) Matthew 6:21

Additional Bible References

- **Philippians 3:20** – "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ."
- **Romans 8:23** – "We ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for our adoption as sons and daughters, the redemption of our body."
- **Revelation 21:4** – "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will no longer be any death... mourning, or crying, or pain."
- **2 Corinthians 5:2** – "For indeed, in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven."
- **Colossians 3:2** – "Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth."

O Day That Never Ends

[Verse 1]
O blessed light, O distant shore,
Where time shall bind my heart no more.
The saints rejoice in endless rays,
While I still walk these shadowed days.

[Chorus]
O day that never ends, draw near,
Dispel my doubt, dissolve my fear.
My soul is restless till it sees
The glory of eternal peace.

[Verse 2]
This world is thorns, a fleeting breath,
A veil of sin, a road to death.
But deep within, I yearn for You,
For all You are, for all that's true.

[Chorus]
O day that never ends, draw near,
Dispel my doubt, dissolve my fear.
My soul is restless till it sees
The glory of eternal peace.

[Bridge]
Come, Heavenly Sweetness, still my mind,
Let vain pursuits be left behind.
Renew my heart, revive my flame,
And let me live to bless Your Name.

[Final Chorus]
O day that never ends, arise,
Break forth from heav'n into my skies.
Let all my sorrow find release
In You, O Lord, my perfect peace.

Chapter 49. Of the Desire for Eternal Life, and the Great Rewards Promised to Those Who Strive

1. “My child, when you feel a deep longing for eternal joy rising up in you from above, and you yearn to leave the tent of your earthly body so you can behold My glory without interruption, open wide your heart and welcome this holy inspiration with all your soul. Give heartfelt thanks to the Supreme Goodness, who treats you kindly, visits you tenderly, stirs your heart so passionately, and lifts you up so powerfully—lest you be dragged down by the weight of your own nature into the things of this world. This desire is not born from your effort or imagination, but from the grace and kindness of the Most High, who gives it freely—so that you may grow in virtue, be humbled more deeply, prepare for future trials, and cling to Me with all your heart, serving Me with a burning will.”

2. “My child, sometimes the fire burns, but the smoke rises with the flame. In the same way, some people burn with desire for heaven, but earthly temptations still cloud their hearts. So, even though their longing seems sincere, it is not always purely for My glory. This has also been true for you—your desires have not always been free of self-interest. What you thought was holy longing was still mixed with personal motives. A truly pure desire does not seek comfort or advantage, but only what pleases Me and brings Me glory.”

3. “Do not seek what feels good to you or brings you benefit, but seek what honors Me and aligns with My will. If your heart is rightly ordered, you will choose My plan over your own desires, and over anything else that can be desired. I see your longing. I’ve heard your deep sighs. You already hunger for the glorious freedom of God’s children, and you are delighted by the thought of heaven. But the time hasn’t come yet. There is still a season of battle, of work, and of testing. You want to be filled with the Supreme Good—but not yet. *I AM* that Good. Wait for Me until My Kingdom is revealed.”

4. “You still need to be tested here on earth. You’ll be stretched in many ways. I will give you comfort at times—but not full satisfaction. Be strong and brave, both in your labor and in enduring what you would rather avoid. You must put on the new self and be transformed. You’ll have to do things you don’t want to do, and refrain from things you desire. What others like will succeed; what you desire may fail. What others say will be welcomed; what you say may be ignored. Others will ask and receive; you will ask and go unanswered. Others may be praised, but you will be unnoticed. They may be entrusted with great tasks; you will seem useless.”

5. “Because of this, your human nature will feel sorrow—and it will be a great thing if you can endure it quietly. In this, and in many similar trials, My faithful servants are tested— to see how much they are willing to deny themselves and yield in all things. Nothing will test you more than when you’re asked to obey something you think is unwise or unhelpful. But because you are under authority and cannot resist, it will seem hard to surrender your will and submit to another’s direction.”

6. "But think, My child, about the fruit of these trials—their quick end, and their unimaginable reward. When you do, it will seem easy to endure them. You will find joy in the patience you have learned. Even the smallest sacrifice made for My sake will be richly rewarded. In heaven, you will have your deepest desires fulfilled forever. You will lack nothing good. Your will shall be united with Mine, and you will want nothing that is selfish or outside of Me. No one will oppose you, no one will complain about you, no one will block your path. All that you long for will be present and overflowing with joy. I will give you glory in place of shame, garments of praise instead of sorrow, and a throne in My Kingdom in exchange for the lowest place you accepted on earth. There, the fruit of your obedience will shine. Your repentance will be celebrated. Your humble surrender will be crowned with glory."

7. "So, bow yourself in humility under everyone. Don't be troubled by who says what, or who gives the orders. Whether the request comes from a superior, a peer, or someone beneath you, take it all with grace, and do your best to fulfill it. Let others pursue fame or praise; let them be honored a thousand times over. But you—rejoice in being ignored. Rejoice that I am pleased and glorified through you. This is what you should desire most: that whether through your life or your death, God may be glorified in you."(1)

(1) Philippians 1:20

Additional Bible References

- **Romans 8:23** – "We ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for our adoption as sons and daughters, the redemption of our body."
- **2 Corinthians 4:17** – "For our momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison."
- **Galatians 6:9** – "Let's not become discouraged in doing good, for in due time we will reap, if we do not become weary."
- **Hebrews 10:36** – "For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised."
- **Revelation 2:10** – "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."

Wait for the Kingdom

[Verse 1]
When fire burns high and hope breaks through,
And heaven calls with colors true,
My heart lifts up beyond the skies,
To seek my home where glory lies.

[Chorus]
Wait for the Kingdom, stand through the test,
Endure in the shadows, and I will give rest.
The road may be narrow, the battle be long,
But joy everlasting will silence all wrong.

[Verse 2]
Though others rise while I’m passed by,
And silence greets my earnest cry,
Yet still I walk the hidden way,
For You, O Lord, are my light and stay.

[Chorus]
Wait for the Kingdom, stand through the test,
Endure in the shadows, and I will give rest.
The road may be narrow, the battle be long,
But joy everlasting will silence all wrong.

[Bridge]
All I have lost shall be given again,
Not for my glory, not for men's acclaim.
But in Your presence, pure and refined,
I'll gain the treasure no world could define.

[Final Chorus]
Wait for the Kingdom, hold to the flame,
Joy is your promise, sealed in My name.
The thorns of the moment will bloom into peace—
My Kingdom is coming, your hope will not cease.

Chapter 50. How a Desolate Person Should Entrust Himself into God's Hands

1. Lord, Holy Father, may You be blessed now and forever, for all things happen as You will, and what You do is always good. Let Your servant find joy in You—not in himself, not in anyone else—for You alone are my true joy. You are my hope, my crown, my joy, and my glory, O Lord. What do I have that I didn't receive from You—even without deserving it? Everything I possess has come from You, whether created or given. I have been poor and troubled since my youth, (1) and my soul is heavy with sorrow, sometimes so burdened that it trembles under the weight of suffering.

2. I long for the joy of peace. I plead for the peace You give to Your children, for they are fed by You in the light of Your comfort. If You give peace, if You pour holy joy into me, then the soul of Your servant will sing and praise You. But if You withdraw—as You often do—then I can no longer run the path of Your commands. Instead, I am brought low, beating my chest and kneeling down, because it is not with me now as it was before, when *Your lamp shone upon my head* (2) and *I walked under the shadow of Your wings*,(3) protected from temptation.

3. O righteous Father, worthy of eternal praise, the hour has come for Your servant to be tested. Beloved Father, it is good that Your servant should suffer for Your sake. O Father, forever adored, the time You knew from eternity is here—when for a little while I must be humbled outwardly, yet remain inwardly alive with You; when I must be small and overlooked in the eyes of others, burdened with sorrow and weakness, that I might rise with You into the light of a new dawn and be glorified in heavenly places. O Holy Father, this is what You have planned and willed—and what You will is always done.

4. For this is Your gift to Your friend: to suffer in this world for love of You, however often, and through whatever means You permit. Nothing happens on earth without Your purpose and providence. It is good for me to suffer, Lord, so that I may learn Your ways, (4) and be stripped of pride and arrogance. It is a blessing when shame covers my face, for then I seek comfort in You, not in people. Through these things, I have learned to fear Your unsearchable judgments—You who afflict both the righteous and the wicked, yet always with justice.

5. I thank You for not ignoring my sins but disciplining me with love, allowing sorrow and hardship to come upon me from within and without. There is no true comfort under heaven except in You, O Lord my God, the Great Physician of souls. You strike and heal. You bring low and raise up. (5) Even Your rod and discipline teach me wisdom.

6. Look upon me, loving Father. I am in Your hands. I submit myself beneath the rod of Your correction. Strike my back and neck, that I may straighten what is crooked in me and bend to Your will. Make me a humble and obedient disciple, as You have done

with others before me, so that I may follow every movement of Your hand. I commit myself and all that I have to Your correction—it is better to be chastened now than to be judged later. You know all things—nothing in my conscience is hidden from You. You know what will happen before it comes to pass. No one needs to inform You or remind You of the things done on the earth. You know what is truly best for me and how suffering helps to scrub away the rust of sin. Do whatever pleases You, and do not despise this sinful life of mine—for no one knows its depths as You do.

7. Lord, grant me to know what truly matters; to love what is worth loving; to praise what delights You most; to value what You esteem; and to reject what You despise. Don't let me judge by what I see or by what the world says, but help me to judge rightly between what is seen and what is spiritual—always seeking Your will above all.

8. People are so often wrong in their judgments. Lovers of the world are deceived because they chase what is visible. What does it matter if a man is honored by other men? One deceiver praises another; one fool flatters another; one blind person admires another blind person; one weak person praises another who is equally weak. They bring shame upon each other with their hollow praise. As humble Saint Francis said, "What each person is in Your sight, that he is—and nothing more."

(1) Psalm 88:15
(2) Job 29:3
(3) Psalm 17:8
(4) Psalm 119:71
(5) Job 13:2

Additional Bible References

- **Isaiah 64:8** – "But now, Lord, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You our potter, and all of us are the work of Your hand."

- **Hebrews 12:11** – "For the moment, all discipline seems not to be pleasant, but painful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterward it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness."

- **1 Peter 5:6** – "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you at the proper time."

- **Romans 8:18** – "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that is to be revealed to us."

- **Psalm 94:12** – "Blessed is the man whom You discipline, Lord, and whom You teach from Your Law."

You Are My Portion

[Verse 1]
O Lord, my only portion,
I trust in what You give.
Though all the world should vanish,
In You alone I live.
You take me through the fire,
You purge me in the flame—
And when I am forgotten,
You still uphold my name.

[Chorus]
I am Yours, and You are mine,
In the storm or in the shine.
Though I fall a thousand times,
Your hand will lift me high.
I will rest inside Your will,
Though the winds be strong or still.
In the silence of the night,
You are my portion and my light.

[Verse 2]
No praises from the people,
No strength in flesh I claim.
But mercy in Your judgment,
And hope within my shame.
You scourge with holy kindness,
You strike to make me whole—
And every pain You fashion
Is healing for my soul.

[Chorus]
I am Yours, and You are mine,
In the storm or in the shine.
Though I fall a thousand times,
Your hand will lift me high.
I will rest inside Your will,
Though the winds be strong or still.
In the silence of the night,
You are my portion and my light.

[Bridge]
Teach me what to treasure,
Show me what is true.
Help me lose the world's applause
To find delight in You.

[Final Chorus]
I am Yours, and You are mine,
Beyond all space, beyond all time.
Though I'm weak, Your love is strong—
You have held me all along.
I will rest inside Your will,
Though the winds be strong and still.
In the silence of the night,
You are my portion and my light.

Chapter 51. That We Must Devote Ourselves to Humble Tasks When We Are Unequal to Higher Ones

1. "My child, you are not always able to remain in a state of burning desire for virtue, nor can you always stand firm in the heights of spiritual contemplation. Because of your human frailty, you must sometimes descend into more ordinary things, and carry the burden of mortal life—even if you do so reluctantly and with weariness. As long as you wear this mortal body, you will experience fatigue and a heaviness of heart. Therefore, you ought often to groan within yourself because of this burden of flesh, since you cannot always give yourself fully to spiritual study or divine contemplation without interruption.

2. "In such seasons, it is good for you to turn to humble and outward tasks, to refresh your spirit through acts of service. Wait patiently and with trust for My coming and My heavenly encouragement. Endure the dryness and sense of exile with perseverance, until I return to comfort you and set you free from every anxiety. Then I will make you forget your labor and allow you to taste eternal peace. I will open wide for you the green pastures of Scripture, and with an enlarged heart, you will run joyfully in the way of My commandments. And you will say, 'The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that will be revealed in us.'"(1)

(1) Romans 8:18

Additional Bible References

- **Galatians 6:9** – "Let's not become discouraged in doing good, for in due time we will reap, if we do not become weary."
- **1 Corinthians 15:58** – "Be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."
- **Psalm 73:26** – "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."
- **Isaiah 40:31** – "Yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles."
- **Ecclesiastes 9:10** – "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might."

Even in the Weary Hours

[Verse 1]
I cannot always climb the heights,
Where holy fire burns bright;
But in the shadows of the day,
I'll serve with all my might.
The burden of this flesh I wear
Still pulls my spirit low,
Yet in these humble, quiet works,
Your light begins to grow.

[Chorus]
Even in the weary hours,
You are with me still.
When I cannot feel the fire,
I'll trust Your perfect will.
With hands that toil and feet that ache,
I wait for You to come—
And find beneath the yoke of life,
The peace of being known.

[Verse 2]
Not always will my heart be stirred
To songs of praise and prayer,
But in the silence of routine,
I know that You are there.
The dry and dusty paths I tread
Still lead me to Your grace;
Each act of love, though small it seems,
Is sacred in its place.

[Chorus]
Even in the weary hours,
You are with me still.
When I cannot feel the fire,
I'll trust Your perfect will.
With hands that toil and feet that ache,
I wait for You to come—
And find beneath the yoke of life,
The peace of being known.

[Bridge]
Your word is still my pasture green,
Your truth, my daily bread;
And when You come to visit me,
My soul is raised from dread.

[Final Chorus]
Even in the weary hours,
You are with me still.
When I cannot feel the fire,
I'll trust Your perfect will.
In fields of grace, I'll run again,
When all the trials are done—
And every lowly task I bore
Will shine beneath the Son.

Chapter 52. That a Man Ought Not to Consider Himself Worthy of Comfort, But Rather of Correction

1. O Lord, I am not worthy of Your comfort, nor of any spiritual encouragement. So You act justly when You leave me poor and desolate. Even if I were able to weep oceans of tears, I would still not deserve Your consolation. I am worthy of nothing except discipline and punishment, because I have offended You deeply and repeatedly. Truly, when all is considered, I am not worthy of even the smallest measure of Your comfort. But You, O gracious and merciful God, who do not wish for the work of Your hands to perish, reveal the riches of Your mercy upon those whom You've chosen for compassion,(1) and You graciously go beyond anything I deserve—comforting Your servant far beyond what is common to man. For Your comfort is unlike the words and sympathies of people.

2. What have I done, Lord, that would cause You to offer me even one moment of heavenly comfort? I cannot recall any good thing I've done. I've always been quick to sin and slow to change. That is the truth, and I cannot deny it. If I tried to say otherwise, You would rise up to prove me wrong, and there would be no one left to defend me. What do I truly deserve for my sins, except hell and eternal fire? I confess it plainly: I am worthy of scorn and contempt, and I do not deserve to be counted among Your faithful servants. And even though my pride recoils at this, I will—for the sake of truth—confess my guilt, so that I may be more quickly granted Your mercy.

3. What can I say, O guilty and confused soul that I am? I have no words—except one: "I have sinned, Lord, I have sinned; have mercy on me and forgive me." Leave me alone now, that I may find a moment of comfort before I go to the land from which no traveler returns—the land of darkness and the shadow of death. (2) What do You ask of a miserable sinner like me but that I be truly contrite and humble myself because of my sins? From this place of true sorrow and brokenness arises the hope of pardon. The troubled conscience is healed. Lost grace is restored. The soul is spared from Your righteous anger. And there, in mercy, You run to meet the penitent heart, and greet it with a holy kiss. (3)

4. Lord, the sincere sorrow of a sinner is a pleasing offering to You—far more fragrant to You than incense. It is that sweet ointment You desire to be poured out on Your sacred feet, for a broken and contrite heart You have never despised. (4) That is the place of safety from the accusing voice of the enemy. That is where the soul is cleansed from every evil it has gathered elsewhere.

(1) Romans 9:23
(2) Job 10:20–21
(3) Luke 15:20
(4) Psalm 51:17

Additional Bible References

- **Isaiah 57:15** – "I dwell in a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly."
- **1 John 1:9** – "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous, so that He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
- **Joel 2:13** – "Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in mercy."
- **Psalm 34:18** – "The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."
- **Luke 18:13** – "God, be merciful to me, the sinner!"

I Have Sinned, Lord

[Verse 1]
I am not worthy of Your peace,
Nor even one kind word.
For all my deeds cry out for shame,
My heart has not yet learned.
I've wandered far from mercy's path,
And bruised Your love again;
Yet still You wait with open arms,
To cleanse me from my sin.

[Chorus]
I have sinned, Lord, I have sinned—
Have mercy now on me.
Let my tears be prayers You gather,
Let my sorrow set me free.
You are just, yet full of kindness,
Slow to anger, rich in grace—
I am nothing, yet You love me,
And I fall before Your face.

[Verse 2]
I offer not my worth or works,
But ashes, wounds, and cries;
I bring the broken parts of me,
And lay them at Your side.
I know I've earned the fire of wrath,
Yet still I seek Your light—
For You forgive the penitent,
And welcome us each night.

[Chorus]
I have sinned, Lord, I have sinned—
Have mercy now on me.
Let my tears be prayers You gather,
Let my sorrow set me free.
You are just, yet full of kindness,
Slow to anger, rich in grace—
I am nothing, yet You love me,
And I fall before Your face.

[Bridge]
A contrite heart, You won't despise,
A sinner's cry You hear.
So draw me near with cleansing fire,
And wipe away each fear.

[Final Chorus]
I have sinned, Lord, I have sinned—
Have mercy now on me.
By Your wounds and by Your mercy,
Let this captive soul go free.
Though I'm low, You lift the humble;
Though I'm lost, You make a way—
So I'll praise You in my sorrow,
And arise to love today.

Chapter 53. That the Grace of God Does Not Abide with Those Who Cling to Earthly Things

1. "My child, My grace is priceless. It refuses to be mingled with outward distractions or worldly comforts. That's why you must put aside everything that interferes with grace if you truly desire to receive its fullness. Seek a quiet place for yourself. Love solitude. Avoid needless conversations, and instead pour out heartfelt prayers to God. Only then will you find a repentant heart and a clear conscience. Count the entire world as nothing, and desire to be alone with God above all else. You cannot dwell in My presence while also delighting in passing earthly things. You must separate yourself from familiar companions and release yourself from all worldly comforts. This is why the blessed Apostle Peter urged that My followers live in this world as strangers and exiles."(1)

2. "How peaceful it will be for the dying person who is held back by no attachment to the things of this world. But such inward freedom is difficult for a soul still ruled by weakness. The spiritually immature do not yet grasp the liberty that belongs to the one led by the Spirit. If anyone wishes to be truly spiritual, he must give up attachment both to distant things and to close ones—especially to himself. Be more cautious with yourself than with anyone else. If you conquer yourself, you will easily overcome everything else. True victory is self-mastery. The one who brings his flesh into submission to reason, and brings his reason into obedience to Me, has overcome himself and reigns over the world."

3. "If you want to reach that place of freedom, then begin with courage. Take the axe to the root. Uproot and destroy your secret love for yourself and for anything selfish or worldly. This one fault—loving yourself too much—is the source of nearly every other. Once it is conquered, you will have lasting peace. But few truly strive to die to themselves; few genuinely leave their selfishness behind. That is why so many remain trapped in their own desires and cannot rise above themselves. Yet whoever longs to walk freely with Me must put to death every evil desire and every selfish affection—and must not cling to any creature with self-centered love."

(1) 1 Peter 2:11

Additional Bible References

- **Luke 14:33** – "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions."
- **Galatians 5:24** – "Now those who belong to Christ Jesus crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."
- **Colossians 3:2** – "Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth."

- **James 4:4** – "Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God?"

- **Romans 12:1** – "Present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."

Set Me Free from Earthly Chains

[Verse 1]
Your grace is pure, it will not stay
Where worldly passions crowd the way.
It will not mix with passing things,
Or dwell where selfish comfort clings.
So strip me, Lord, of all I hold,
That I may find Your peace untold.

[Chorus]
Set me free from earthly chains,
Let no desire or self remain.
Give me grace to love You more,
To leave this world, not self adore.
I would walk alone with Thee,
In quiet joy and purity.

[Verse 2]
To die to self is sacred gain,
The only path to lose my chains.
If I subdue my will within,
Then I will rise, and truly win.
The one who bows to You alone,
Shall reign with You before Your throne.

[Chorus]
Set me free from earthly chains,
Let no desire or self remain.
Give me grace to love You more,
To leave this world, not self adore.
I would walk alone with Thee,
In quiet joy and purity.

[Bridge]
O axe of truth, cut to the root,
Remove in me the poisoned fruit.
Let holy fire burn away
All that draws my soul astray.

[Final Chorus]
Set me free from earthly chains,
Let no desire or self remain.
Give me grace to love You more,
To leave this world, not self adore.
I would walk alone with Thee,
In quiet joy and purity.

Chapter 54. The Contrasting Movements of Human Nature and God's Grace

1. “My child, carefully observe the workings of human nature and of grace. They move in opposite and subtle ways, and only a spiritually enlightened person can tell them apart. All people seek what seems good and claim good intentions in what they do—but the mere appearance of goodness deceives many.

2. “Human nature is deceptive. It pulls, entraps, and misleads, always acting for its own benefit. Grace, however, moves with honesty and turns away from all that merely appears good. It does nothing for show, and acts only for the glory of God, resting in Him alone.

3. “Nature resists dying to self. It rebels against submission, loss, and the yoke of obedience. But grace longs for self-denial, fights against the desires of the flesh, delights in being conquered, and doesn’t demand freedom. It embraces discipline, desires no control, and continually seeks to live under God’s authority—ready to submit to any human institution for God's sake.

4. “Nature is always looking out for itself, calculating what benefit it can gain from others. On the other hand, Grace asks not what is profitable to self but what benefits many.

5. “Nature craves praise and honor. Grace, by contrast, gives all glory to God and seeks nothing for itself.

6. “Nature fears shame and disgrace. Grace finds joy in suffering for the name of Jesus.

7. “Nature wants rest and bodily comfort. Grace refuses to be idle and embraces hard work with joy.

8. “Nature delights in beautiful, costly things and dislikes what is rough or plain. But grace finds contentment in what is humble, delights in simplicity, and has no concern for outward appearance.

9. “Nature is attached to temporary things, rejoices in worldly profit, and is troubled by losses and harsh words. Grace fixes its hope on eternal things, remains calm in loss, and is not disturbed by criticism—because its treasure is stored in heaven, where nothing can be destroyed.

10. “Nature is greedy, prefers to receive rather than give, and hoards what is personal. Grace is generous, avoids selfishness, is content with little, and believes giving is better than receiving.

11. “Nature draws you toward created things, to fleshly desires and distractions. Grace pulls you upward—to God, to virtue, and away from the world and its cravings. It avoids the spotlight and feels shame in chasing worldly attention.

12. “Nature craves outward comfort that pleases the senses. Grace seeks to be comforted only by God, delighting in Him as the highest good, above all that is seen.

13. “Nature wants a return for every deed, praise for every gift. It expects recognition and thanks. But grace seeks no reward beyond God Himself. It desires nothing more than what is necessary to reach eternal life.

14. “Nature glories in having many friends and important relatives. It flatters the powerful, honors the wealthy, and surrounds itself with people like itself. But grace loves even enemies, is not proud of connections, and favors virtue over status. It prefers the poor over the rich, the humble over the mighty, the truthful over the flattering. It urges all believers to grow in grace and become more like Christ.

15. “Nature quickly complains about hardship and lack. Grace endures poverty with patience.

16. “Nature views everything from a self-centered lens, argues for its own opinions, and pushes its own way. Grace submits everything to God, gives Him credit for all good, doesn’t boast, and doesn’t insist on its own views. Instead, it seeks divine wisdom and rests in God's judgment.

17. “Nature wants to know secrets, be entertained, and chase sensations. It craves admiration and novelty. But grace is uninterested in shallow curiosity. It avoids vanity and pride, hides its virtues, and seeks only the glory of God in all things.

18. “Grace is a divine light, a special gift of God, a distinguishing mark of the chosen, and the pledge of eternal life. It lifts the soul above the earth and transforms the fleshly mind into a spiritual one. The more human nature is subdued and denied, the more grace increases—and the inner person is renewed daily in the image of God by fresh visitations from above.”

Additional Bible References

- **Galatians 5:17** – “For the desire of the flesh is against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.”

- **James 4:6** – “God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”

- **Romans 8:6** – “For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.”

- **2 Corinthians 4:16** – “Though our outer person is decaying, yet our inner person is being renewed day by day.”

- **Colossians 3:2** – “Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth.”

Grace and Nature

[Verse 1]
Nature stirs with selfish aim,
Clothed in goodness, yet seeking fame.
Grace walks gently, pure and true,
Turning hearts to follow You.

[Chorus]
Grace and nature, side by side,
One must fall and one must rise.
Grace leads upward, light and free,
Nature clings to vanity.
Make me walk the better way,
Led by grace, not led astray.

[Verse 2]
Nature loves the world's applause,
Fears the cross and hates the laws.
Grace delights in humble place,
Glories in the scars of grace.

[Verse 3]
Nature gathers, hides, and hoards,
Seeks reward and worldly lords.
Grace gives freely, asks no prize,
Treasures God above the skies.

[Bridge]
Let the old man fade and die,
Lift me, Lord, to live on high.
Break the chains of self and pride,
That in You I may abide.

[Final Chorus]
Grace and nature, side by side,
One must fall and one must rise.
Grace leads upward, light and free,
Nature clings to vanity.
Make me walk the better way,
Led by grace, not led astray.

Chapter 55. On the Corruption of Human Nature and the Power of Divine Grace

1. Lord my God, You created me in Your own image and likeness. Please give me the grace—so great and so necessary for salvation—that I may overcome my corrupt nature, which draws me toward sin and destruction. I feel the law of sin in my body, warring against the law of my mind, making me a slave to sensual desires in many ways. I cannot resist these passions unless Your most holy grace is poured into my heart with power.

2. I need Your grace. Not just a little, but an abundance, to conquer this fallen nature, which has always leaned toward evil since my youth. Because of Adam's fall, human nature has been corrupted by sin, and this inherited stain has passed to all people. Although You made our nature good and upright, it now often refers to the frailty and vice of that corrupted state, because left to itself, it pulls us downward toward sin. The little strength that remains is like a spark hidden in ashes—natural reason, still capable of distinguishing good from evil and truth from falsehood, but clouded and weak. It sees what is right but cannot do it. It lacks the full light of truth and the health of right affections.

3. That's why, O my God, I delight in Your law in my inner self, knowing Your commands are holy, righteous, and good. I despise all evil and sin. But in my flesh, I still serve the law of sin, letting sensuality rule over reason. I want to do what is good, but I don't have the strength to do it. I often plan to do what is right, but without the help of grace, I fall at the slightest resistance. I clearly see the path to maturity and perfection, but I cannot rise to meet it under the weight of my own corruption.

4. How utterly necessary is Your grace, O Lord—for beginning well, for continuing in goodness, and for bringing anything to completion. Without it, I can do nothing; but with Your grace strengthening me, I can do all things. O heavenly grace, without which all human effort is useless, and even our natural gifts are of no lasting worth! Intelligence, wealth, beauty, strength, creativity, eloquence—none of these matter without Your grace. Natural gifts are shared by both the righteous and the wicked; but grace—that is, love—is the unique possession of the elect, and marks them as heirs of eternal life. Grace is so powerful that even prophecy, miracles, or lofty spiritual insights are nothing without it. Neither faith, nor hope, nor any other virtue is acceptable to You without love and grace.

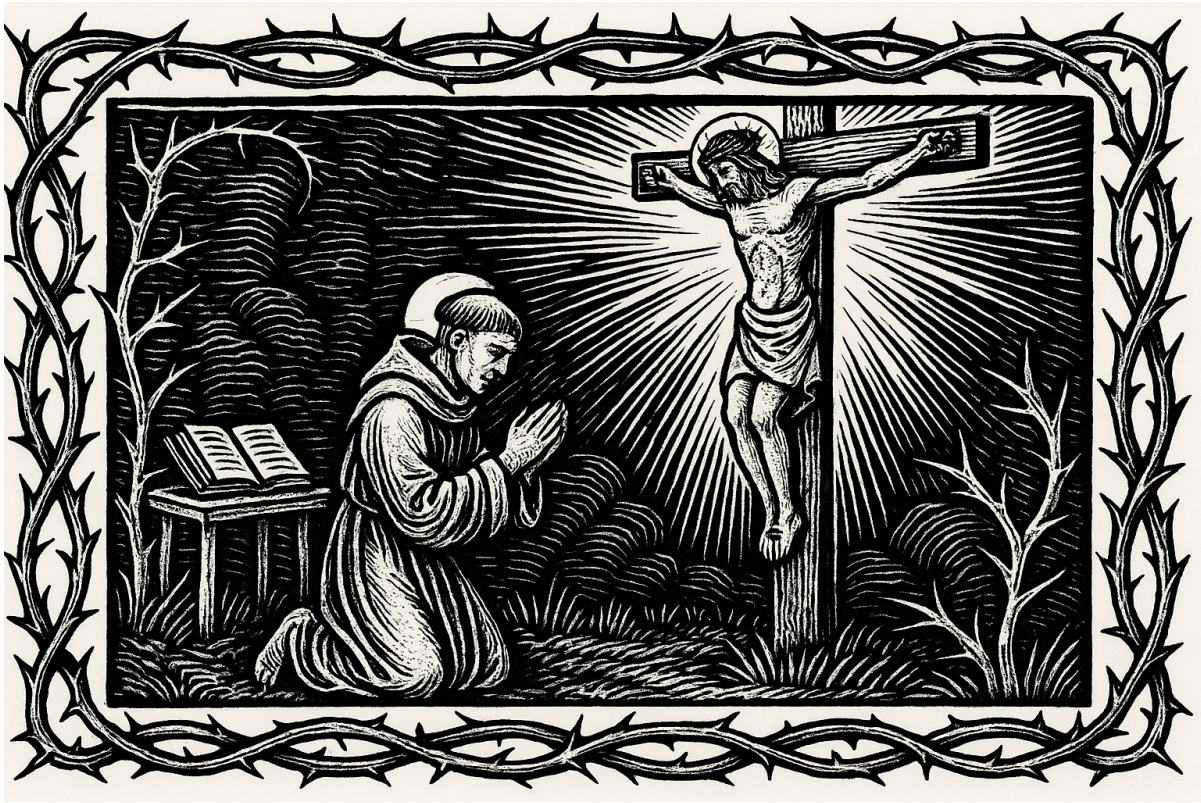
5. O most blessed grace, You make the poor in spirit rich in virtue, and the rich in worldly things humble in heart. Come to me! Fill me early with Your comfort, so that my soul doesn't faint from spiritual dryness. I beg You, Lord, let me find favor in Your sight—for Your grace is enough for me when I lack what my nature desires. If I am tempted and troubled by many trials, I will not fear as long as Your grace is with me. That alone is my strength. It gives me wisdom and help. It is stronger than all enemies and wiser than all the world's counselors.

6. Grace is the guide of truth, the teacher of discipline, the light of the heart, the comfort in distress, the remover of sorrow, the deliverer from fear, the source of devotion, and the one who brings forth tears of repentance. Without it, what am I? A dry tree, a lifeless branch, only fit to be cast away! So let Your grace, O Lord, always go before me and follow me. Let it keep me always devoted to every good work, through Jesus Christ, Your Son. Amen.

(1) Romans 7:12, 22. 25
(2) Romans 7:18.
(3) Philippians 4:13
(4) 2 Corinthians 12:9

Additional Bible References

- **Jeremiah 17:9** – "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?"
- **John 15:5** – "Apart from Me you can do nothing."
- **Romans 5:20** – "But where sin increased, grace abounded all the more."
- **Titus 2:11–12** – "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires."
- **Ephesians 2:8–9** – "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not a result of works, so that no one may boast."



The Grace I Need

[Verse 1]
Formed in Your image, broken by sin,
The battle within me keeps drawing me in.
But grace like a river flows deeper than shame,
Lifting me up as I call on Your name.

[Chorus]
Grace I need, grace I cry,
Lift me, Lord, lest I wither and die.
Only You can make me whole,
Pour Your power into my soul.
Grace I need, grace alone,
To lead me onward, to bring me home.

[Verse 2]
My strength is fleeting, my will is frail,
Each noble effort is doomed to fail.
But in Your grace, I rise again,
Not by my merit, but by Your hand.

[Bridge]
Grace to begin, and grace to stay,
Grace to walk in the narrow way.
Grace to finish, grace to stand,
Held secure by Your strong hand.

[Final Chorus]
Grace I need, grace I cry,
Lift me, Lord, lest I wither and die.
Only You can make me whole,
Pour Your power into my soul.
Grace I need, grace alone,
To lead me onward, to bring me home.

Chapter 56. That We Ought to Deny Ourselves and Imitate Christ Through the Cross

1. *My child, the more you are able to step outside yourself, the more deeply you will be able to enter into Me*. Just as letting go of external desires brings inward peace, inner self-denial brings you into union with God. I want you to learn true self-denial—to live within My will, without resistance or complaint. *Follow Me; I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*. (John 14:6) Without the Way, you cannot move forward; without the Truth, you cannot know what is right; without the Life, you cannot truly live. I am the straight and unchanging Way, the infallible Truth, the everlasting and blessed Life. Stay on My path, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. Then you will lay hold of eternal life.

2. *If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments*. If you want to know the truth, believe in Me. If you desire to be perfect, sell what you own. If you want to follow Me, deny yourself. If you long for the joy of heaven, don't cling to the pleasures of this world. If you hope to be exalted in heaven, be humble here on earth. If you want to reign with Me, you must bear the cross with Me. Only those who take up the cross will find the path of true joy and eternal light.

3. Lord Jesus, since Your life was narrow and despised by the world, help me to imitate You by despising the world as well. *The servant is not greater than his Master, nor the disciple above his Teacher.* (Matthew 10:24) Let me find my training and salvation in the life You lived, because only there is true holiness found. Nothing I read or hear outside of that gives me strength or joy.

4. *My child, since you know these things and have read them, you will be blessed if you live them out*. The one who has My commands and obeys them is the one who loves Me. I will love him, and I will reveal Myself to him. I will make him sit with Me in My Father's Kingdom.

5. Lord Jesus, as You have spoken and promised, so let it be for me—and give me grace to be found worthy. I have received the cross from Your hand; I have carried it, and I will continue to carry it until death, just as You have given it to me. Truly, the life of a devoted servant is a cross—but it is a cross that leads to paradise. I have begun this journey. I cannot turn back, and I will not abandon it.

6. Come, brothers, let us go forward together. Jesus walks with us. For His sake, we have taken up this cross, and for His sake, let us remain steadfast beneath it. He who led us on this path will help us finish it. Look—our King goes before us and He will fight on our behalf. Let us follow Him boldly, without fear. Let us be ready to suffer and even die in this battle. Let us not dishonor ourselves by fleeing from the cross.

(1) John 14:6.
(2) John 8:32.
(3) Matthew 19:17, 21.

(4) Matthew 10:24.
(5) John 14:21.
(6) 1 Maccabees 9:10.

Additional Bible References

- **Luke 9:23** – "If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me."
- **Galatians 2:20** – "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me."
- **Philippians 3:10** – "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death."
- **2 Timothy 2:12** – "If we endure, we will also reign with Him."
- **Hebrews 12:2** – "Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the originator and perfecter of the faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross."

Follow Me to the Cross

[Verse 1]
Since You are the Way, I will walk in Your light,
Through valleys of sorrow, through trials of night.
Your footsteps before me, the path You have shown—
A road marked with crosses, yet never alone.

[Chorus]
Follow Me to the cross, where the battle is won,
Where dying brings life and the race is run.
No turning back, I count all as loss—
My Savior says, "Come, follow Me to the cross."

[Verse 2]
Since You are the Truth, I will hold to Your Word,
Though lies surround me and voices are blurred.
Since You are the Life, I will lay mine down,
To share in Your sorrow and gain Your crown.

[Bridge]
Not for comfort, not for pride—
I follow the Crucified.
Let the world its treasures keep,
I'll sow in pain and harvest peace.

[Final Chorus]
Follow Me to the cross, where the battle is won,
Where dying brings life and the race is run.
No turning back, I count all as loss—
My Savior says, "Come, follow Me to the cross."

Chapter 57. That a Man Must Not Be Too Much Cast Down When He Falls into Some Faults

1. "My child, patience and humility in hard times please Me more than comfort and devotion when things are going well. Why does a small word spoken against you make you so sad? Even if it were more severe, you still should not be shaken. Let it pass. This isn't the first time, it's not unusual, and it won't be the last if you live long. You are confident enough when nothing goes wrong. You give good advice and can encourage others with your words. But when hardship comes to your own door, your counsel and your strength fall short. This shows your deep weakness, which you often discover even in minor troubles. Yet it's all allowed for your good—to humble you and to save your soul."

2. "Cast such troubles out of your heart as best you can. And if trials affect you, don't let them overwhelm or entangle you for long. At the very least, endure them patiently if you can't rejoice in them. Even when you don't want to hear criticism and feel anger rising, control yourself—don't let careless words slip out that might hurt others. Soon, the storm within will quiet down, and your sorrow will be soothed by returning grace. I still live," says the Lord, "ready to help you and give more comfort than before—if you will trust Me and sincerely call on Me."

3. "Calm your heart and prepare yourself for greater endurance. All is not lost just because you are often troubled or strongly tempted. You are a human being—not God. You are made of flesh—not an angel. How can you expect to remain always in the same state of virtue, when even angels in heaven fell and Adam stumbled in paradise? I am the One who lifts up the sorrowful and brings healing. I raise up those who admit their weakness and draw them into fellowship with My divine life."

4. Lord, Your word is blessed—sweeter to me than honey from the comb. What could I do in such heavy trials and distress if You didn't comfort me with Your promises? If only I reach the harbor of salvation, what does it matter what I suffer or how much? Grant me a good ending, Lord—a faithful, peaceful passage from this life. Remember me, my God, and guide me on the right road to Your Kingdom. Amen.

Additional Bible References

- **2 Corinthians 12:9** – "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."

- **Psalm 34:18** – "The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."

- **Romans 5:3-4** – "We also celebrate in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope."

- **Proverbs 24:16** – "For a righteous person falls seven times and rises again, but the wicked stumble in time of disaster."

- **Psalm 73:26** – "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."

More Than My Failures

[Verse 1]
When I stumble and fall in the darkness again
When I'm weary and weak and unsure where I've been
Your voice in the silence still speaks to my soul
"You're not forgotten, I'm still in control."

[Chorus]
You are more than my failures, stronger than shame
You carry me gently and call me by name
When I can't find the words, when I don't understand
Still You hold me forever in Your faithful hand

[Verse 2]
I remember the times I stood tall in Your grace
But pride found a way to erase what I faced
Now broken, I come with my weakness confessed
And fall at Your mercy, where I find my rest

[Chorus]
You are more than my failures, stronger than shame
You carry me gently and call me by name
When I can't find the words, when I don't understand
Still You hold me forever in Your faithful hand

[Bridge]
Though trials may knock and my courage may sway
You steady my heart and You teach me to stay
You whisper the truth when the battle is long
You lift up the lowly and make the weak strong

[Chorus]
You are more than my failures, stronger than shame
You carry me gently and call me by name
When I can't find the words, when I don't understand
Still You hold me forever in Your faithful hand

[Outro]
So lead me, O Shepherd, through shadow and light
I'm safe in Your mercy, I rest in Your might

Chapter 58. Of Deeper Matters, and God's Hidden Judgments Which Are Not to Be Inquired Into

1. "My child, do not engage in disputes over lofty matters or try to unravel the hidden judgments of God—why one person is left in hardship while another is lifted up in favor, or why one suffers much while another is greatly exalted. These are beyond human understanding; no reasoning or argument can uncover My divine judgments. So when the enemy brings these thoughts to you, or when curious people ask such things, answer with the words of the Psalmist: *'Righteous are You, Lord, and upright are Your judgments'* and *'The judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether.'* My judgments are to be feared, not debated, because they go beyond what the human mind can grasp."

2. "And don't become preoccupied with who among the saints is holier or higher in Heaven. Such speculation breeds pointless arguments and pride. It fuels envy and division when one person elevates this saint and another exalts that one. Desiring to know these things brings no real benefit—it displeases the saints themselves. I am not the God of confusion but of peace, and that peace comes through humility, not competition."

3. "Yes, some may feel drawn to one saint or another out of deep love, but that is often human affection, not divine discernment. I made all the saints. I gave them grace. I brought them to glory. I know the merit of each. *I went before them with the blessings of My goodness*. I chose them before the world began. *They did not choose Me—I chose them*. I called them by My grace, led them through many trials, poured out deep comfort on them, gave them endurance, and crowned them for their faithfulness."

4. "I know both the first and the last. I embrace all My saints with immeasurable love. I am to be praised in every one of them and exalted above all. I glorified and predestined them without regard to their own merit. Whoever despises even the least of My people dishonors the greatest, for I made both small and great. And whoever criticizes one of My saints criticizes Me and the whole heavenly host."

5. "They are united in love, bound together in charity. They are of one mind and heart, desiring and delighting in the same thing—above all, in Me. Their joy in Me surpasses all self-interest or personal glory. Caught up beyond themselves, they rest in Me in pure delight. Nothing can pull them away or cast them down, for they are filled with Eternal Truth and burn with unquenchable love."

6. "Let natural-minded people be silent about the saints. They know only how to love their own pleasure, adjusting their views based on personal likes and dislikes, not divine truth. Their ignorance is deep—especially in those who have little spiritual insight and rarely love with pure spiritual affection. As they judge earthly things according to their own desires, so too do they misunderstand heavenly realities. But the difference between their flawed imaginings and what My enlightened ones see through revelation is vast."

7. "So, My child, don't trouble yourself with things beyond your reach. Focus on what is truly important—seek to be counted even as the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. Even if someone could know who is the holiest among the saints, how would that help unless it led to deeper humility and greater praise of My name? The one who considers how many sins he's committed, how little virtue he has, and how far he is from the holiness of the saints—he does far better in My sight than the one who debates their rank."

8. "The saints themselves are content. They wish only that others would be content, too, and stop their idle chatter. They boast in nothing of their own, for they attribute all they have to Me. I gave them everything out of My love. Their love for Me fills them completely; their joy overflows. Nothing is lacking to them. The higher they are in glory, the humbler they are in heart. The closer they are to Me, the more they worship. That is why you read that they *cast their crowns before God, fell on their faces, and worshipped the Lamb who lives forever and ever.*"

9. "Many ask who is greatest in Heaven, though they do not know whether they'll even be among the least. To be counted among the least in Heaven is already great, for all there are sons and daughters of God. *'The least one will become a thousand, but the sinner who lives a hundred years will be cursed.'* When My disciples asked *'Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?'* they received only this answer: *'Unless you are converted and become like little children, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the Kingdom.'*"

10. Woe to those who refuse to humble themselves like children. The narrow gate will not let them in. Woe to the rich who have found their comfort on earth—for while the poor enter God's Kingdom, they will stand outside, weeping. Rejoice, you humble ones, and be glad, you poor—for the Kingdom of God is yours, if you walk in truth.

(1) Psalm 69:137
(2) Psalm 19:9
(3) 1 Corinthians 14:33
(4) Psalm 21:3
(5) John 15:19
(6) Wisdom 6:8.
(7) Revelation 4:10, 14
(8) Matthew 18:3
(9) Luke 6:24

Additional Bible References

- **Isaiah 55:8-9** – "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," declares the Lord.

- **Romans 11:33** – "Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!"
- **1 Corinthians 8:2** – "If anyone thinks that he knows anything, he has not yet known as he ought to know."
- **James 4:10** – "Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you."
- **Revelation 19:10** – "Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, 'Do not do that! I am a fellow servant of yours... Worship God!'"

Who Am I to Question?

[Verse 1]
Who am I to question glory? Who am I to weigh the crown?
When the saints fall down in worship, I should lay my striving down
For the Judge of all is righteous, and His thoughts are high and true
And His mercy writes the story that I never fully knew

[Chorus]
Your ways are deep, Your thoughts unknown
You lift the lowly, and call them Your own
I won't chase answers that You've concealed
I'll rest in grace and the love You revealed

[Verse 2]
Why this pain and not another? Why that soul and not my own?
These are questions for the Father, not for flesh and blood alone
You have loved and You have chosen, not because of what we've done
So I'll bow before Your wisdom, and adore the Risen Son

[Chorus]
Your ways are deep, Your thoughts unknown
You lift the lowly, and call them Your own
I won't chase answers that You've concealed
I'll rest in grace and the love You revealed

[Bridge]
Let the saints be crowned with glory
Let their praise be only Yours
I will seek to walk in mercy
And to serve behind the doors
Let me be the least in Heaven
If I enter by Your grace
I will kneel beside the angels
Overwhelmed to see Your face

[Chorus]
Your ways are deep, Your thoughts unknown
You lift the lowly, and call them Your own
I won't chase answers that You've concealed
I'll rest in grace and the love You revealed

[Outro]
So I cast my crowns before You
And I bow on holy ground
You are just and true forever
And in You my peace is found

Chapter 59. That All Hope and Trust Is to Be Fixed in God Alone

1. O Lord, what is my hope in this life, or what comfort do I truly have in anything under the sun? Is it not You, O Lord my God, whose mercies are endless? When has it ever gone well for me apart from You? And when could it be truly bad when You were near? I would rather be poor with You than rich without You. I would rather be a stranger and pilgrim on earth with You than to claim heaven itself without You. Where You are, there is heaven. Where You are not, there is death and hell. You are my deepest longing, so I must groan, cry out, and pray fervently for Your presence. In truth, I can place full confidence in no one else to help me in time of need but You alone, O my God. You are my hope, trust, comforter, and the One who is always faithful.

2. *All people seek their own interests,* but You alone pursue my salvation and turn everything to my eternal good. Even when You expose me to trials and many hardships, You do so for my benefit, for You often test those You love in countless ways. And even then, You are just as worthy of my love and praise as when You fill me with heavenly comfort.

3. Therefore, O Lord God, I put all my hope and trust in You. I cast all my burdens and sorrows upon You, because everything outside of You proves to be unstable and unreliable. Many friends may not help, strong allies may not rescue, wise advisors may not have answers, books of great learning may not console, riches may not deliver, nor secret places offer safety—unless You, O Lord, are present to help, to strengthen, to comfort, to guide, and to keep me.

4. All these things that seem to offer peace and happiness are worthless without You, and they bring no true joy apart from You. You alone are the source of all good, the fullness of life, and the voice of truth. To place our hope in You above all else is the greatest strength and comfort Your servants can know. *My eyes are fixed on You,* O Lord, for You are my trust—my God, the Father of mercies.

5. Bless and sanctify my soul with Your heavenly grace, that it may be a fitting dwelling place for You and the throne of Your eternal glory. Let nothing be found in the temple of my soul that would offend Your majesty. In Your great goodness and mercy, hear the prayer of Your poor servant, who is far from home and walking through the valley of the shadow of death. Protect and preserve the soul of Your least servant amid the dangers of this fleeting life. By Your grace, lead me along the path of peace to the everlasting light of my true home. Amen.

(1) Philippians 2:21
(2) Psalm 141:8

Additional Bible References

- **Jeremiah 17:7** – "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose trust is the Lord."
- **Psalm 62:5** – "My soul, wait in silence for God alone, for my hope is from Him."
- **Hebrews 13:5** – "I will never desert you, nor will I ever abandon you."
- **Isaiah 26:3** – "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You."
- **1 Peter 5:7** – "Having cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares about you."

All My Hope Is in You

[Verse 1]
When I have nothing left to hold
And every earthly gain grows cold
When every voice but Yours is through
Still I will lift my eyes to You

[Chorus]
All my hope is in You, my Rock and my Light
You are my refuge in day and in night
Though friends may fail and riches flee
Still You remain enough for me
All my hope, all my hope is in You

[Verse 2]
I'd rather walk through fire with grace
Than feast without Your holy face
I'd rather be a stranger here
Than find a home where You're not near

[Chorus]
All my hope is in You, my Rock and my Light
You are my refuge in day and in night
Though friends may fail and riches flee
Still You remain enough for me
All my hope, all my hope is in You

[Bridge]
You are the song within the storm
The peace that calms my every war
The Comforter when I despair
The only One who's always there

[Verse 3]
So sanctify this heart of mine
Let it become Your dwelling shrine
Keep me until the race is done
And lead me home, O Faithful One

[Chorus]
All my hope is in You, my Rock and my Light
You are my refuge in day and in night
Though friends may fail and riches flee
Still You remain enough for me
All my hope, all my hope is in You

[Outro]
Forever faithful, ever true
All my hope is in You

THE FOURTH BOOK: OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR

A Devout Exhortation to the Holy Communion

The Voice of Christ

Come to Me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest, says the Lord.[1] The bread that I will give is My flesh, which I offer for the world's life.[2] Take and eat—this is My Body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.[3] Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood lives in Me, and I live in him. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.[4]

[1] Matthew 11:28 – "Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
[2] John 6:51 – "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats from this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I will give for the life of the world also is My flesh."
[3] Matthew 26:26; Luke 22:19 – "Take, eat; this is My body." / "This is My body, given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."
[4] John 6:56, 63 – "The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood remains in Me, and I in him." / "The words I have spoken to you are spirit, and are life."

Chapter 1. With How Great Reverence Christ Must Be Received

The Voice of the Disciple

1. These are Your words, O Christ, Eternal Truth—though not all spoken at one time nor recorded in one place in Scripture. Yet because they are truly Yours, I must receive them with grateful faith. They are Yours, and You have spoken them for my salvation. I receive them joyfully from Your mouth, so that they may be planted deeper in my heart. Words so full of grace stir my soul—they are filled with sweetness and love—but my sins trouble me, and my impure conscience causes me to shrink back from receiving such great mysteries. The sweetness of Your words gives me courage, but the weight of my guilt presses me down.

2. You command me to draw near to You with confident trust if I want to share in You, and to receive the food of immortality if I seek eternal life and glory. “Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” Oh, sweet and loving invitation to the sinner—that You, O Lord my God, invite the poor and needy to receive Your most holy Body and Blood. But who am I, Lord, that I should dare to come near? Heaven itself cannot contain You, and still You say, “Come to Me.”

3. What is the meaning of such amazing condescension and gracious invitation? How can I presume to come when I know of no good in myself that would make me worthy? How can I welcome You into my house, when I have so often sinned before Your loving eyes? Angels and archangels tremble before You, and the saints stand in awe—and yet You say, "Come to Me"! If You had not said it, who would believe it? And if You had not commanded it, who would dare approach?

4. Noah, a righteous man, worked for a hundred years building the ark to save his household. How, then, can I prepare myself in an hour to receive the Maker of the world with reverence? Moses, Your servant and friend, made an ark of incorruptible wood and overlaid it with pure gold to hold the tablets of the law. And I—a corruptible creature—shall I dare to welcome You, the Lawgiver and the Giver of life? Solomon spent seven years building a glorious temple for Your Name and celebrated its dedication with great offerings and music. And I, the poorest of men, can barely spend a half-hour in genuine devotion. And even that half-hour is rarely well spent!

5. O my God, how earnestly those holy ones sought to honor You! How small is what I do! How little time I spend preparing myself for Communion. I am rarely truly focused, and almost never free from distraction. Yet in Your presence no unclean thought should remain, and no created thing should occupy me—because it is not an angel but the Lord of angels that I am receiving.

6. What a vast difference there is between the Ark of the Covenant and Your pure Body—with all its divine power; between the old sacrifices, which were only symbols, and the true sacrifice of Your Body, which fulfills them all.

7. Why then do I not long more deeply for Your sacred presence? Why do I not prepare myself more carefully, when those saints of old—patriarchs, prophets, kings, and all the people—expressed such love and devotion in Your service?

8. King David danced with all his strength before the Ark of the Covenant, remembering Your blessings to his ancestors. He composed songs and instruments for joyful praise. He often played the harp, inspired by the Spirit, and taught Israel to praise You with all their heart. If such devotion was shown then, how much more should I—and all Christians—approach Your Body and Blood with reverence and awe?

Blood of Christ

9. Many travel far to visit the graves of saints and admire their shrines. But You, the Holy of Holies, the Creator of all, are here with me. People are often drawn to shrines by curiosity or novelty, but leave with little spiritual fruit. Here, in the Sacrament of the Altar, You are fully present, O Christ. And to those who receive You with faith and love, You give eternal life. This isn't for the curious or the casual—it's for those with faith, hope, and love.

10. O invisible Creator of the world, how gently and graciously You deal with those You love! How wondrous is this Sacrament! You offer Yourself as food to draw hearts toward You. Your faithful ones, those who seek to grow in holiness, receive strength and virtue from this holy mystery.

11. O marvelous and hidden grace, known only to the faithful in Christ! The wicked and self-serving cannot understand it. In this Sacrament, grace is poured out, virtue is restored, and beauty lost to sin is renewed. Sometimes this grace is so full that even the body is strengthened by the joy of the soul.

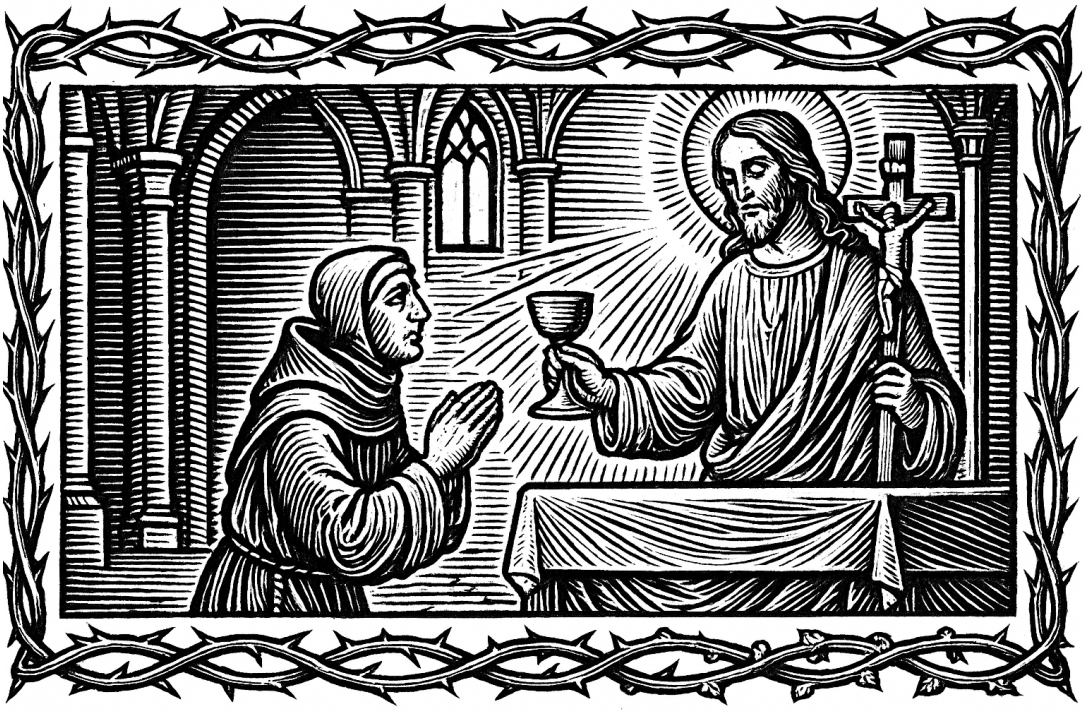
12. But how sad it is that we are so lukewarm and careless—that we do not long more for Christ, the hope and salvation of all who believe. For He is our sanctification and redemption. He is the comfort of those who travel through this world, and the eternal joy of the saints. Yet many ignore this great gift and grow careless and indifferent through frequent use.

13. If this Sacrament were celebrated in only one place on earth, and only by one priest, what great desire people would have to be there! But now, to show His love, Christ has made it widely available, celebrated in many places by many priests. Let us give thanks to You, Jesus, our Eternal Shepherd, for nourishing us poor exiles with Your precious Body and Blood. You invite us with Your own words: “Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

    (1) 1 Corinthians 1:30

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 34:8** – "Taste and see that the Lord is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!"
- **John 6:56** – "The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood remains in Me, and I in him."
- **1 Corinthians 11:28** – "But a person must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup."
- **Hebrews 4:16** – "Therefore let’s approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace for help at the time of our need."
- **Revelation 3:20** – "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.”



The Table Set Before Me

[Verse 1]
How can I come before the King,
So holy, pure, and high?
When angels veil their faces low,
And saints in glory cry.
Yet still You call, "Come unto Me,"
Though stained and weak I be,
I bring my heart, unworthy gift,
And lay it down to Thee.

[Chorus]
You are the Bread, You are the Wine,
The Life that sets me free.
Though heaven's heights can't hold Your name,
You come to dwell with me.
Your mercy sets a table here,
A feast of grace divine—
And trembling, I receive You now,
In body, blood, and sign.

[Verse 2]
The prophets longed to see this day,
The kings rejoiced to know—
The promise wrapped in mystery
Fulfilled in bread below.
O God made flesh, O gift of love,
Too deep for minds to scan—
Come, dwell within this broken soul,
And make me whole again.

[Bridge]
Let reverence still my wandering heart,
Let awe replace my pride.
May every thought and deed prepare
A temple where You'll bide.
I'd rather be Your pilgrim here
Than throne without Your face—
So feed me with eternal life,
And clothe me in Your grace.

[Final Chorus]
You are the Bread, You are the Wine,
The Life that sets me free.
Though heaven's heights can't hold Your name,
You come to dwell with me.
You sanctify this earthen frame,
This heart You now refine—
And trembling, I adore You, Lord,
In body, blood, and sign.

Chapter 2. That the Greatness and Love of God Is Shown to Humanity in the Sacrament

The Voice of the Disciple

1. Trusting in Your goodness and great mercy, O Lord, I come near—sick, to the Healer; hungry and thirsty, to the Fountain of Life; poor, to the King of Heaven; a servant, to the Master; a creature, to the Creator; desolate, to my gentle Comforter. But how is it that You come to me? Who am I, that You would offer Yourself to me? How can a sinner dare to stand before You? And how do You, the Holy One, choose to draw near to a sinner? You know me, Lord, and You know that there is nothing good in me that would earn such grace. So I confess my unworthiness, acknowledge Your goodness, praise Your gentleness, and thank You for Your overwhelming love. You do this for Your own sake, not because I deserve it. You show Your goodness, pour out Your love, and display Your humility—so that I might know You better. Therefore, because it pleases You and You have commanded it, I also embrace Your mercy—and oh, that my sin would not hinder it!

2. O most kind and loving Jesus, what reverence and thanksgiving are due to You for the gift of Your holy Body and Blood—something no human tongue can fully express! But when I come to Communion, what should I focus on, since I cannot give You the honor You deserve, though I long to receive You devoutly? What better or healthier meditation than to humble myself before You, and to lift up and praise Your infinite goodness to me? I praise You, O my God, and exalt You forever. I cast myself down in humility, acknowledging my deep unworthiness.

3. You are the Holy of Holies, and I am the lowest of sinners. Yet You stoop down to me, who am unworthy even to look upon You. You come to me, desire to be with me, and invite me to Your table. You offer me the heavenly food—the Bread of Angels—which is none other than Yourself, the Living Bread who came down from heaven and gives life to the world. (1)

4. Look at this love! See what humility and grace shine here! How great is the thanks and praise that I owe You for this blessing. Oh, how wise and healing was Your purpose in establishing this sacrament! How sweet and nourishing the meal when You gave Yourself as food! How incredible are Your works, O Lord—how mighty is Your power, how unsearchable Your truth! You spoke, and it was so. What You command is done.

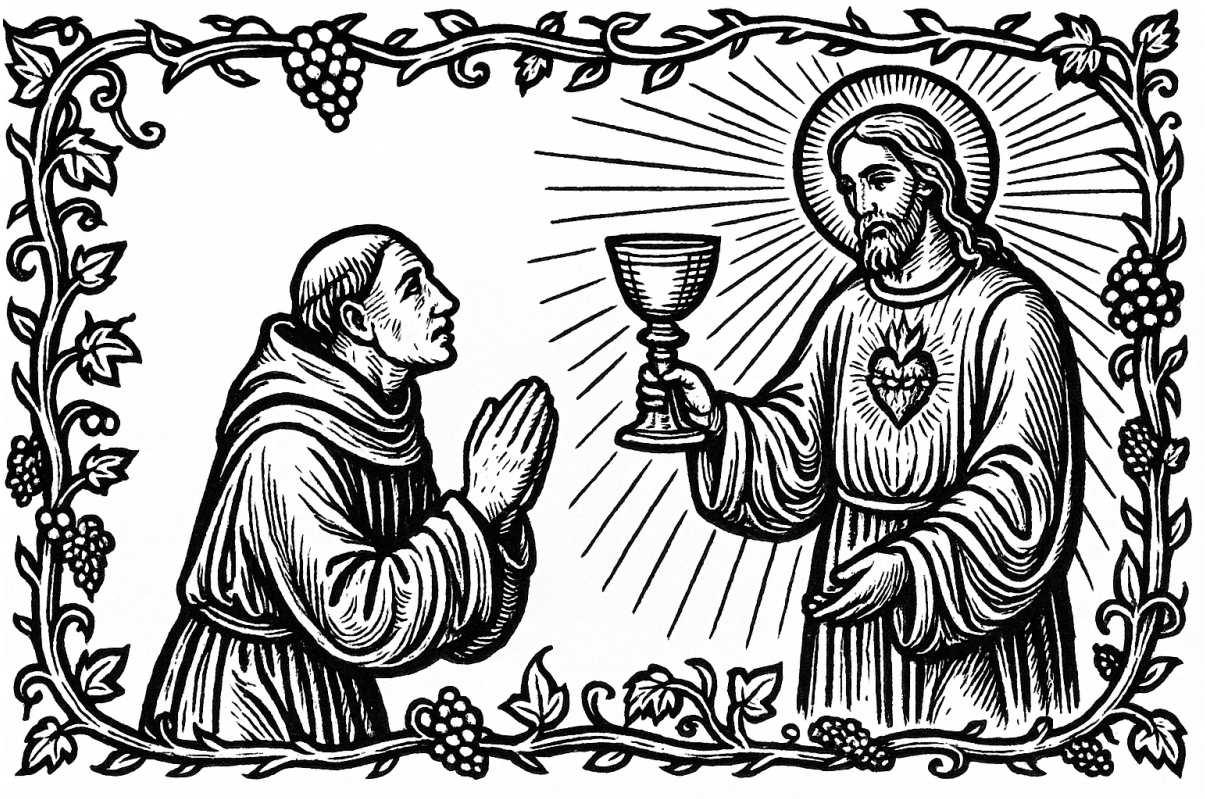
5. This is a mystery both wonderful and worthy of faith—far beyond human understanding—that You, O Lord my God, true God and true Man, give Yourself to us entirely in a little bread and wine. You become our never-ending food. You, who need nothing, choose to live in us through this Sacrament. Keep my heart and body pure, so that with joy and a clear conscience I may often receive these holy mysteries, which You instituted for Your glory and for a lasting memorial.

6. Rejoice, O my soul, and give thanks to God for such a great gift—this precious comfort given to you in this valley of tears. Every time you remember this mystery and receive Christ's Body, you celebrate your redemption and share in all the merits of Christ. His love never diminishes, and His sacrifice never runs out. Therefore, you should continually renew your spirit and reflect deeply on the greatness of this salvation. It should feel as fresh and joyful as if Christ were just now entering the Virgin's womb, or just now hanging on the cross for the world's salvation.

   (1) John 6:51

Additional Bible References

- **1 Corinthians 10:16** – "Is the cup of blessing which we bless not a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is the bread which we break not a sharing in the body of Christ?"
- **Romans 5:8** – "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
- **John 6:35** – "Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; the one who comes to Me will not be hungry, and the one who believes in Me will never be thirsty.'"
- **Isaiah 55:1** – "You who have no money, come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost."
- **Titus 3:5** – "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we did in righteousness, but in accordance with His mercy."



O Living Bread of Heaven

[Verse 1]
O Living Bread of Heaven, come,
To hearts made poor and bare.
You stoop to meet the lowest one,
And lift him with Your care.
Though unworthy, still I draw near,
By mercy's sovereign call,
To feast upon the gift of love—
The greatest gift of all.

[Chorus]
You are the Bread that satisfies,
The Wine that makes me whole.
You fill the cup, You lift my eyes,
You sanctify my soul.
What king would kneel to feed the least?
What grace would condescend?
Yet here You come with peace and joy,
My Savior and my Friend.

[Verse 2]
This table is no common fare,
No earthly food or drink.
In mystery and truth it holds
More than I dare to think.
The Maker in the creature dwells,
The Shepherd feeds His sheep;
The Lamb who bore my sin and shame
Now bids me rise and eat.

[Bridge]
Let every time I come be new,
Like Christ was born today—
Like He now hangs upon the cross
To take my guilt away.
Awake, my soul, and tremble deep,
Let love and faith unite.
For here the veil is torn again,
And heaven touches night.

[Final Chorus]
You are the Bread that satisfies,
The Wine that makes me whole.
You fill the cup, You lift my eyes,
You sanctify my soul.
No treasure ever could compare,
No banquet ever end—
For You, O Christ, are all I need,
My Savior and my Friend.

Chapter 3. That It Is Beneficial to Receive Communion Frequently

The Voice of the Disciple

1. Here I come to You, Lord, seeking blessing through Your gift and joy through the sacred feast that, in Your kindness, You've prepared for the poor. (1) In You is all that I need and should desire. You are my salvation, redemption, hope, strength, honor, and glory. So today, gladden the soul of Your servant—for to You, Lord Jesus, I lift up my soul. (2) I long to receive You devoutly and reverently. I want to welcome You into my life, like Zacchaeus welcomed You into his home, so that I, too, might be blessed by Your presence and counted among the children of Abraham. My soul hungers for Your Body; my heart yearns to be united with You.

2. Give me Yourself, which is enough— no other comfort can satisfy me. Without You, I cannot live. Without Your presence, I have no strength. That's why I must come to You often, receiving You again and again for the healing of my soul, lest I faint along the journey without this heavenly nourishment. You, merciful Jesus, once said when You were teaching and healing the crowds, "I will not send them away hungry, or they may faint along the way."(3) Deal with me now the same way, for You left Yourself in the Sacrament as a lasting comfort for all believers. You are the sweet refreshment of my soul. Whoever eats of You worthily becomes a partaker of eternal glory. It is absolutely necessary for me—who so often slips backward, grows cold, and becomes weary—to be renewed, cleansed, and set on fire again through frequent prayer, repentance, and by receiving Your sacred Body and Blood. Otherwise, I may fall away from my holy intentions by going too long without.

3. For human thoughts and desires are bent toward evil from youth, (4) and unless divine grace comes to help, we continually drift toward worse things. Holy Communion pulls us back from evil and strengthens us for good. If I'm already this distracted and lukewarm when I do receive, what would happen if I stopped receiving Your healing grace altogether? Even if I'm not always perfectly prepared to receive, I will still make every effort to come with reverence at the right time, because this is the greatest comfort to a faithful soul. At the same time, we are still separated from You in this mortal body—to remember our God, and to receive our Beloved with a devout heart.

4. Oh, how wondrous is Your mercy that surrounds us! You, Lord God, Creator and Giver of life, choose to come to a poor and weak soul, satisfying its hunger with Your full Deity and humanity. Oh, what a joyful and blessed soul is the one that receives You devoutly! What a mighty Lord it welcomes, what a beloved Guest it receives, what a delightful Companion it embraces, what a faithful Friend it gains, what a beautiful and exalted Bridegroom it clings to—one who surpasses all others in love! O my most sweet Beloved, let heaven and earth fall silent before You. Whatever praise or beauty they contain comes from Your generosity, but even they cannot match the glory of Your Name, whose wisdom is beyond measure.(5)

(1) Psalm 68:10 (2) Psalm 86:4 (3) Matthew 15:32 (4) Genesis 8:21 (5) Psalm 86:4

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 34:8** – "Taste and see that the Lord is good; how blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!"
- **John 6:55–56** – "For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood remains in Me, and I in him."
- **Isaiah 40:29** – "He gives strength to the weary, and to the one who lacks might He increases power."
- **Hebrews 4:16** – "Therefore let's approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace for help at the time of our need."
- **Revelation 3:20** – "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me."

Come to the Table Again

[Verse 1]
I come again with empty hands,
A weary soul in need.
You are the strength that never fails,
The Bread on which I feed.
No other joy, no earthly friend
Can fill this heart of mine—
But at Your table, Lord of grace,
Your love and life I find.

[Chorus]
Come to the table again,
Taste of the mercy that flows.
Drink of the life without end,
A peace the world never knows.
Broken and weak though I am,
Still You invite me in.
Washing my soul in Your blood—
Come to the table again.

[Verse 2]
I slip, I stray, I grow so cold,
My zeal begins to fade.
But in Your presence, I am healed,
By wounds that love has made.
You feed the thousands, calm the storm,
And walk upon the sea.
You come to me with pierced hands
To share Your life with me.

[Bridge]
O Holy Guest, O Lamb once slain,
Your table draws me near.
Though heaven's hosts in awe remain,
You whisper, "Do not fear."
So I believe, and bow my soul,
Where angels hide their face—
And find in simple bread and wine
The fullness of Your grace.

[Final Chorus]
Come to the table again,
Taste of the mercy that flows.
Drink of the life without end,
A peace the world never knows.
Welcome the Savior, divine—
Lover and closest Friend.
He gives Himself once for all—
Come to the table again.

Chapter 4. That Many Good Gifts Are Bestowed Upon Those Who Receive Communion Devoutly

The Voice of the Disciple

1. Lord my God, surround Your servant with blessings of Your kindness so that I may draw near worthily and with reverence to Your glorious Sacrament. Awaken my heart toward You and deliver me from spiritual slumber. Visit me with Your salvation so that in spirit I may taste the sweetness You have hidden in this Sacrament as in a fountain. Enlighten my eyes to behold this great mystery and strengthen me to believe in it with unwavering faith. For it is Your word, not human power; it is Your sacred institution, not the invention of man. No one is fit by themselves to receive or comprehend these truths, which are beyond even the wisdom of angels. So what part can I, an unworthy sinner and mere dust and ashes, understand of this profound mystery?

2. O Lord, in simple trust, firm faith, and obedience to Your will, I draw near to You, believing You are truly present—God and man—in the Sacrament. You have called me to receive You and unite myself with You in love. Therefore, I plead for mercy and ask for special grace: dissolve my heart in love for You, that no other comfort may distract or satisfy me. This most exalted and glorious Sacrament brings healing to both body and soul. It cures spiritual sickness, subdues temptation, pours out new grace, strengthens what is weak, and increases faith, hope, and love.

3. In this Sacrament, You have given and continually give great blessings to Your chosen ones who receive You devoutly. You lift up the soul, restore the weak, and comfort the sorrowful. You raise them from their misery into hopeful trust in You and refresh them with new grace. Those who once felt dull and distant now, after receiving You, are often inwardly renewed and changed. You give to each according to their need, so they may recognize that nothing good comes from themselves but only from You. They are dry, hard, and cold in themselves, but they become fervent and alive through You. Who can come humbly to the fountain of sweetness and not receive at least a drop? Who can stand near a burning fire and not feel some of its warmth? You are that fountain—always full—and the fire that never goes out.

4. Even if I cannot drink deeply from the fountain or be fully satisfied, I will at least press my lips to the stream, hoping for a small drop to relieve my thirst and keep my heart from drying up. Even if I cannot be as heavenly or enflamed as the Cherubim and Seraphim, I will still seek to prepare my heart and open myself to devotion so that I may receive at least a spark of divine fire through the humble reception of Your life-giving Sacrament. Whatever I lack, O merciful Jesus, Most Holy Savior, provide it by Your kindness and grace. You have called all the weary to Yourself, saying, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

5. I labor and toil, I am weighed down with sorrow, burdened by sin, tempted on every side, and entangled in many passions. There is no one to help or rescue me fully—

except You, O Lord God, my Savior. To You I entrust myself and everything I have. Preserve me and lead me to eternal life.

Receive me for the praise and glory of Your name, for You have prepared Your Body and Blood to be my food and drink. Grant, O Lord my God, that my zeal and devotion may increase with every reception of Your sacred mysteries.

Additional Bible References

- **Hebrews 4:16** – "Therefore let's approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace for help at the time of our need."
- **Psalm 34:8** – "Taste and see that the Lord is good; how blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!"
- **1 Corinthians 11:28** – "But a person must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup."
- **Isaiah 55:1** – "You who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost."
- **John 7:37** – "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink."

The Bread That Fills My Soul

[Verse 1]
Lord, I come with empty hands,
To receive the gift divine.
In this holy bread and wine,
Heaven's mercy now is mine.

[Chorus]
You are the Bread that fills my soul,
The living Fire that makes me whole.
In every drop and every crumb,
I taste the grace of Christ the Son.

[Verse 2]
Though I'm weak and full of need,
You invite me still to come.
With a heart that dares believe,
I find healing in Your love.

[Chorus]
You are the Bread that fills my soul,
The living Fire that makes me whole.
In every drop and every crumb,
I taste the grace of Christ the Son.

[Bridge]
You are the fountain never dry,
The fire that burns beyond the sky.
O feed me now, and let me be,
A vessel filled with only Thee.

[Verse 3]
Even one small drop of grace
Brings new light into this place.
Every time I kneel and eat,
My heart finds rest at Jesus' feet.

[Chorus]
You are the Bread that fills my soul,
The living Fire that makes me whole.
In every drop and every crumb,
I taste the grace of Christ the Son.

[Outro]
Until I dine at heaven's throne,
This sacred meal will lead me home.

Chapter 5. On the Dignity of the Sacrament and the Office of the Priest

The Voice of the Beloved

1. Even if you possessed the purity of an angel and the holiness of John the Baptist, you would still be unworthy to receive or minister this Sacrament. No human being merits the right to consecrate or partake of the bread of angels. The mystery is vast, and the priesthood holds an astounding dignity. To priests alone—those rightly ordained in the Church—is granted the power to consecrate and celebrate the Body of Christ. The priest serves as God's minister, using God's Word according to His command and institution. Yet it is God Himself who is the true Author and invisible Worker—He to whom all things submit, and whose word none can resist.

2. Therefore, you must trust in the power of Almighty God in this holy Sacrament more than in your own senses or what is visibly seen. Approach this work with fear and reverence. Reflect carefully on what has been entrusted to you through the bishop's laying on of hands. You have become a priest, consecrated to celebrate the mysteries of Christ. See that you do so with faithfulness and reverence, presenting yourself blameless before God. Your burden has not been lightened; rather, you are now bound to a stricter discipline and called to a higher standard of holiness. A priest ought to be adorned with every virtue and serve as a model of holy living. His conversation should not reflect the common ways of the world, but instead be in fellowship with angels or those mature in godliness.

3. Clothed in sacred vestments, the priest stands in Christ's place, interceding before God with humility and fervent prayer—for both himself and the whole people. He must constantly remember the Passion of Christ. He should study Christ's steps and earnestly strive to follow them. Whatever suffering or offense is laid upon him by others, he must bear with patience for the sake of God. He should grieve over his own sins and those of others, never becoming lax in prayer or the sacred offering, until he has moved heaven to grant grace and mercy. When the priest offers the celebration, he honors God, brings joy to angels, builds up the Church, aids the living, communes with the dead, and himself receives a share in every good thing.

Additional Bible References

- **Hebrews 5:1** – "For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of people in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins."
- **1 Corinthians 11:26** – "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."
- **Malachi 2:7** – "For the lips of a priest should maintain knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of armies."

- **James 3:1** – "Do not become teachers in large numbers, my brothers, since you know that we who are teachers will incur a stricter judgment."

- **1 Peter 5:2-3** – "Shepherd the flock of God among you... not lording it over those assigned to your care, but being examples to the flock."

- **1 Peter 2:9** "But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

NOTE: The New Testament clearly teaches that all followers of Jesus are priests.

A Higher Calling Still

[Verse 1]
Not even angels dare to tread
Where priests are called to stand—
To speak the words the Savior said
With consecrating hand.

[Chorus]
O sacred charge, O holy flame,
To bear the cross and lift His name.
A shepherd's heart, a servant's will,
To walk the path of Calvary still.

[Verse 2]
The voice of Christ through clay is heard,
The altar trembles not.
For though the hands be flesh and earth,
The work is Heaven-wrought.

[Chorus]
O sacred charge, O holy flame,
To bear the cross and lift His name.
A shepherd's heart, a servant's will,
To walk the path of Calvary still.

[Bridge]
Remember Him in bread and wine,
And mirror back His grace divine.
Bear well the weight, though meek and small—
The priesthood is the highest call.

[Verse 3]
So let the servant intercede,
And lift the Church in prayer.
For Christ, through him, will meet the need,
The Lord Himself is there.

[Chorus]
O sacred charge, O holy flame,
To bear the cross and lift His name.
A shepherd's heart, a servant's will,
To walk the path of Calvary still.

[Outro]
A priest, though dust, stands in the place
Where earth and Heaven meet by grace.

Chapter 6. On Preparing the Heart for Communion

The Voice of the Disciple

1. When I reflect on Your glory, Lord, and my own unworthiness, I am filled with fear and inward shame. If I stay away, I lose the very life I need; but if I come unworthily, I risk incurring Your displeasure. What shall I do, my God—my only Helper and Counselor in all my need?

2. Teach me the right way. Show me a simple practice suitable for preparing my heart to receive Communion. For it is vital to know how to come before You devoutly and reverently, that I may receive this Holy Sacrament in a way that strengthens my soul and leads to salvation.

Additional Bible References

- **1 Corinthians 11:28** – "But a person must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup."
- **Psalm 139:23-24** – "Search me, God, and know my heart... and lead me in the everlasting way."
- **James 4:8** – "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."
- **Matthew 5:8** – "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."
- **2 Corinthians 13:5** – "Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves!”

Prepare My Heart

[Verse 1]
Lord, when I see Your holiness,
And measure it beside my dust,
I fall in trembling lowliness,
Yet in Your mercy still I trust.

[Chorus]
Prepare my heart, O Lord, I pray,
To meet You in this holy way.
Not with pride, but trembling grace,
To seek Your cross, to see Your face.

[Verse 2]
If I stay far, I miss the light,
If I come wrong, I grieve Your name.
But You are patient, good, and right,
And call the broken just the same.

[Chorus]
Prepare my heart, O Lord, I pray,
To meet You in this holy way.
Not with pride, but trembling grace,
To seek Your cross, to see Your face.

[Bridge]
Search me, Lord, and make me whole,
Cleanse my mind and guard my soul.
By Your Spirit guide me through—
To draw in love, and dine with You.

[Verse 3]
So let my soul with reverence bow,
And learn the path of grace and peace.
Each step a prayer, each breath a vow,
Until my striving finds release.

[Final Chorus]
Prepare my heart, O Lord, I pray,
To meet You in this holy way.
In Your presence let me stay—
Prepared in love, day after day.

Chapter 7. On Examining the Conscience and Resolving to Change

The Voice of the Beloved

1. Above all else, when celebrating, serving, or receiving this Holy Sacrament, God's servant must come near with humility of heart and reverent prayer, with full faith and sincere desire for God's glory. Search your conscience carefully, and with all your strength, cleanse and purify it through true sorrow and humble confession, so that you are not weighed down or held back by guilt. Be grieved over all your sins, especially for your daily faults. And if you have time, confess before God in secret the miseries of your inner struggle.

2. Grieve deeply and repent, because you are still so attached to the world and the flesh—so undisciplined in your desires, so quick to give in to your senses, so often caught up in foolish fantasies, and so drawn to outward things while neglecting the inward. You are too quick to laugh, too slow to weep. You seek comfort for the body, but lack spiritual zeal. You're curious about news and beauty, but reluctant to embrace humility and the cross. You desire many things, but give sparingly and hold tightly to what you have. You speak rashly and hesitate to keep silent. Your actions lack thoughtfulness and order. You hunger for food, but not for God's Word. You long for rest, but shrink from labor. You're alert for gossip, but drowsy during prayer. You rush through worship, and your thoughts wander during it. You neglect regular prayer times, grow cold in worship, and reap little fruit from Communion. You are easily distracted and rarely centered. You become angry quickly, judge harshly, and are impatient with others. You celebrate success, but falter in hardship. You make many good resolutions—and fulfill so few.

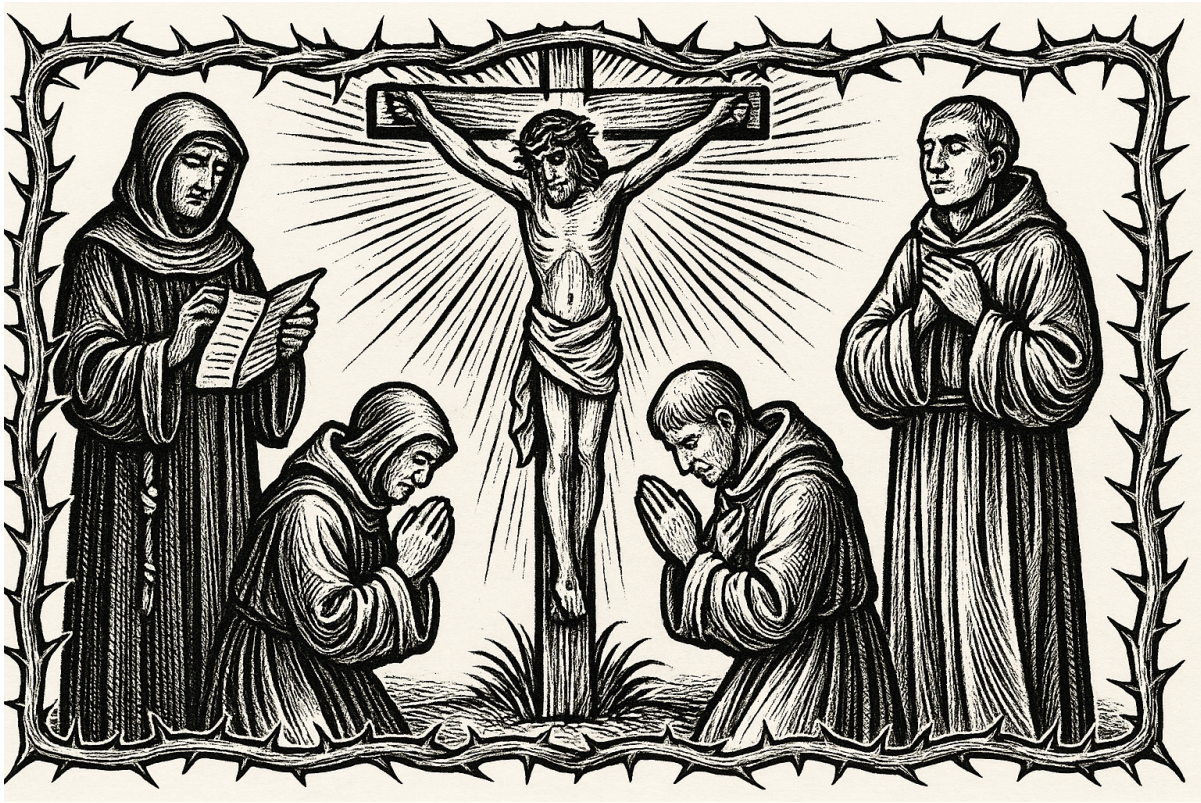
3. After confessing and mourning these faults with genuine sorrow, resolve to change. Commit yourself wholly to God, offering your body and soul as a living sacrifice on the altar of your heart, for His honor. Then you will be worthy to approach and offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and to receive the Body and Blood of Christ for your soul's healing. For there is no offering more pleasing, no greater satisfaction for sin, than when a person gives themselves to God completely—united with the offering of Christ in Holy Communion. If someone does what they can, and truly repents, then however often they come to Me for grace and forgiveness, *"As I live," says the Lord, "I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. None of his transgressions which he has committed will be remembered against him."* (Ezekiel 18:22–23)

Additional Bible References

- **Lamentations 3:40** – "Let's examine and search out our ways, and let's return to the Lord."

- **1 John 1:9** – "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous, so that He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

- **Romans 12:1** – "Present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."
- **Psalm 51:17** – "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, God, You will not despise."
- **2 Corinthians 7:10** – "For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation."



Make Me Ready, Lord

[Verse 1]
Search my soul, O Lord of Light,
Shine Your truth and show what's right.
Every flaw that hides within—
Wash it clean, forgive my sin.

[Chorus]
Make me ready, Lord, I pray,
To kneel in grace this holy day.
With a heart made pure and true,
I bring my life, O Lord, to You.

[Verse 2]
So quick to speak, so slow to hear,
So full of doubt, so poor in fear.
I long for joy, resist the pain—
But You still call me back again.

[Chorus]
Make me ready, Lord, I pray,
To kneel in grace this holy day.
With a heart made pure and true,
I bring my life, O Lord, to You.

[Bridge]
Let no sin be left unspoken,
Let my pride and will be broken.
Lift my hands, renew my soul,
Make this weary sinner whole.

[Verse 3]
What mercy, Lord, that You forgive,
And still desire that I should live!
I bring my faults, my heart's lament,
With hope in grace and true intent.

[Final Chorus]
Make me ready, Lord, I pray,
To kneel in grace this holy day.
With a heart made pure and true,
I bring my life, O Lord, to You.

Chapter 8. On Christ's Offering on the Cross and the Call to Surrender Ourselves

The Voice of the Beloved

1. Just as I willingly offered Myself to God the Father on the Cross for your sins—with outstretched arms and a body stripped bare—leaving nothing back, so you too should offer yourself to Me daily. Let your entire heart, soul, and strength be given as a pure and holy sacrifice. I gave all of Myself as an offering for your forgiveness; now I ask you to surrender yourself entirely to Me. What do I truly desire from you? Not your possessions, but you.

2. If you had everything in the world but lacked Me, you would have nothing of true value. And if you gave Me everything but kept yourself back, your offering would not please Me. Give yourself fully to Me, and your sacrifice will be pleasing. I gave Myself entirely for you—to the Father and also now in My Body and Blood, so that you may wholly belong to Me, and I to you. But if you hold back and do not freely surrender to My will, your offering is incomplete, and our union remains broken. That's why the free surrender of yourself into God's hands must come before all your other works. Only through this surrender can you gain freedom and grace.

   So few are truly enlightened or liberated within, because so few know how to fully deny themselves. My words remain true: *"None of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions."* (Luke 14:33) If you would be My disciple, then offer yourself to Me—with your whole heart and every desire of your soul.

Additional Bible References

- **Romans 12:1** – "Therefore I urge you... to present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."
- **Galatians 2:20** – "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me."
- **Philippians 3:8** – "I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."
- **Matthew 16:24** – "If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me."
- **2 Corinthians 5:15** – "He died for all, so that those who live would no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose on their behalf."

I Offer You My All

[Verse 1]
With arms stretched wide, You bore my shame,
The spotless Lamb, the sinner's flame.
You gave Your all upon that tree—
What can I offer, Lord, but me?

[Chorus]
I offer You my all today,
Not just my words, not just my praise.
I lay my life before Your throne,
To be forever Yours alone.

[Verse 2]
You do not seek what I can bring,
But long to reign as Sovereign King.
Not gifts or deeds or songs I sing—
You want my heart, my everything.

[Chorus]
I offer You my all today,
Not just my words, not just my praise.
I lay my life before Your throne,
To be forever Yours alone.

[Bridge]
Break the chains that hold me still,
Teach me to yield to Your will.
Let surrender be my song—
Make me Yours, where I belong.

[Verse 3]
Your love poured out, complete and true,
Now bids my soul belong to You.
Not part, not half, but all I give,
To You who died that I might live.

[Final Chorus]
I offer You my all today,
Not just my words, not just my praise.
I lay my life before Your throne,
To be forever Yours alone.

Chapter 9. That We Ought to Offer Ourselves and All That We Have to God, and to Pray for All

The Voice of the Disciple

1. Lord, everything in heaven and on earth belongs to You. (1) I want to give myself to You freely, and to remain Yours forever. Today, in sincerity of heart, I offer myself to You to be Your servant for all my days—a humble offering of continual praise. Please accept me in this holy Communion of Your precious Body, which I celebrate today in the presence of unseen angels, so that it may bring salvation to me and to all Your people.

2. Lord, I lay before You all my sins and failures at this table—everything I've done wrong in Your sight and in the sight of Your holy angels, from the moment I first knew how to sin until this very hour. Burn them all away in the fire of Your love. Wipe out every stain of guilt, purify my conscience, restore me to Your favor, and embrace me again with the kiss of peace.

3. What can I do about my sins but confess them humbly, mourn over them, and continually seek Your mercy? Please, Lord, hear me as I stand before You. My sins grieve me deeply. I resolve not to return to them, but to grieve over them all my days and repent sincerely, doing all I can to make things right. For the sake of Your holy name, forgive me. Save the soul You bought with Your own blood. I place myself into Your mercy, O God. I leave myself entirely in Your hands. Judge me by Your mercy, not by my sin.

4. I also offer to You all the good that is in me, though it is small and flawed. Purify and sanctify it. Make it pleasing in Your sight. Draw it forward toward perfection. And bring me—though I am weak, slow, and unworthy—to a good and joyful end.

5. I offer to You the prayers and desires of all the faithful: the needs of my parents, friends, brothers and sisters, all those I love, and all who have blessed me or others in Your name. I pray also for those who have asked for my prayers, whether for themselves or their loved ones. May they all be helped by Your grace, comforted in their sorrows, guarded from danger, and delivered from suffering. And when You deliver them, may they give You heartfelt thanks and praise.

6. I also pray for those who have wronged me, caused me grief, spoken ill of me, or hurt me in any way. And I pray for all whom I have wronged—whether by words or actions, knowingly or unknowingly. Forgive us all our sins, Lord, and cleanse our hearts from anything hindering love—suspicion, anger, resentment, or division. Have mercy, Lord, on all who call out to You. Give grace to those in need, and help us to live lives worthy of Your favor, so that we may one day share together in eternal life. Amen.

(1) 1 Chronicles 29:11
(2) 1 Chronicles 29:17

Additional Bible References

- **Romans 12:1** – "Therefore I urge you... to present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."
- **Philippians 4:6** – "But in everything by prayer and pleading with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."
- **Matthew 5:44** – "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."
- **Colossians 3:13** – "Just as the Lord forgave you, so must you do also."
- **James 5:16** – "Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed."

All I Am Is Yours

[Verse 1]
All that I have, and all I hope to be,
I lay it down, Lord, at Your feet.
You gave it all to rescue me,
Now all I am is Yours completely.

[Chorus]
Take my life, take my days,
Every word and song of praise.
I surrender, nothing I withhold—
I am Yours, forever Yours to hold.

[Verse 2]
I bring my sins, I bring my pain,
All my failings, every stain.
Consume them, Lord, in mercy's flame—
Restore me now in Jesus' name.

[Chorus]
Take my life, take my days,
Every word and song of praise.
I surrender, nothing I withhold—
I am Yours, forever Yours to hold.

[Bridge]
For those who've hurt me, I forgive,
And pray they too may freely live.
For those I've wronged, Lord, hear my cry,
Let love and peace be our reply.

[Verse 3]
I offer prayers for all I know—
In joy and sorrow, high and low.
Let Your grace their portion be,
And draw us all more close to Thee.

[Final Chorus]
Take my life, take my days,
Every word and song of praise.
I surrender, nothing I withhold—
I am Yours, forever Yours to hold.

Chapter 10. That Holy Communion Is Not Lightly to Be Omitted

1. You must often come to the fountain of grace and divine mercy, the wellspring of goodness and purity, so that you may be healed of your weaknesses and strengthened to resist the devil's temptations and traps. The enemy knows the incredible power and healing that Holy Communion offers, so he does all he can to keep the faithful and devout away from it.

2. Whenever believers begin preparing for Communion, Satan often intensifies his attacks, stirring up fear, doubt, and distraction to weaken their resolve or tempt them to avoid the sacrament altogether. Just as we read in Job, the accuser even shows up among the sons of God to do harm. But his threats and lies must be resisted and thrown back in his face. You must not let his schemes rob you of Communion or cause you to approach the Table half-heartedly.

3. Sometimes, excessive worry over confession or fear of not being "ready enough" becomes a stumbling block. Wise counsel says to lay down such anxiety. It steals God's grace and clouds spiritual focus. Don't skip Communion over minor disturbances—confess quickly, forgive others freely, and seek forgiveness if you've wronged anyone. God will be gracious to you.

4. What good is there in delaying your confession or postponing Communion? Rid yourself of the poison of sin as soon as you can; take the remedy, and you'll find relief. If you put it off today, a greater obstacle may arise tomorrow, leaving you even more distant and unfit. Shake off spiritual lethargy quickly. Waiting too long weakens the soul and often leads to a coldness of heart. Sadly, some people become lukewarm and careless, always finding excuses to delay repentance and Communion, just to avoid committing to a holier life.

5. How little love and devotion are shown by those who casually put off receiving Christ! How blessed is the one who lives in such a way that he is always ready to receive Communion, even if unnoticed by others. If someone abstains occasionally out of reverence or humility, he does well. But if it's from laziness, he should wake up and pursue God with what strength he has. God honors a willing heart.

6. Even if someone is truly prevented from receiving, God sees his desire and blesses him with the grace of spiritual Communion. Every day and every hour, anyone can draw near to Christ spiritually, without any outward hindrance. Still, at the appointed times and feast days, believers should receive the Lord's Body and Blood with loving reverence—not for personal comfort, but for God's honor and praise. Whenever we reflect on Christ's incarnation and Passion with love, we experience the spiritual refreshment of Communion.

7. You'll likely be unprepared if you only prepare yourself when a feast arrives or out of routine. Blessed is the one who offers himself to God wholly and faithfully whenever he celebrates or communes. Don't be too slow or too hasty in participating, but follow the customs of your community with respect and cooperation. Don't cause frustration

for others by acting out of sync. Follow the practices passed down by faithful elders, focusing on the benefit of others even more than your own spiritual comfort.

Additional Bible References

- **James 4:7** – "Submit therefore to God. But resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
- **1 Corinthians 11:28** – "But a person must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup."
- **Psalm 42:2** – "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; When shall I come and appear before God?"
- **John 6:35** – "Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; the one who comes to Me will not be hungry, and the one who believes in Me will never be thirsty.'"
- **Luke 22:19** – "This is My body, given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

Draw Me Near

[Verse 1]
When the battle rages round me,
And my soul is faint and dry,
I remember, Lord, Your mercy—
Living Water from on high.
You prepare a feast before me,
Though the enemy draws near;
At Your table, fear must scatter,
Love and grace replace my fear.

[Chorus]
Draw me near, O holy Savior,
To the table of Your grace;
Let no doubt or sin delay me,
I will seek Your holy face.
Though unworthy, still You call me,
With Your mercy ever true—
Draw me near, and I will follow,
To commune, O Lord, with You.

[Verse 2]
When the tempter speaks with cunning,
Whispers shame to make me hide,
I will run into Your presence,
With Your cross as all my pride.
Let me drink the cup of mercy,
Let me eat the bread You give;
In Your sacrifice I'm rescued,
By Your body now I live.

[Bridge]
Even when I cannot gather,
Still I lift my soul in prayer;
In the Spirit I remember,
You are present everywhere.
Let my heart be always ready,
Clean and clothed in Heaven's light—
To receive my King with trembling,
With devotion burning bright.

[Final Chorus]
Draw me near, O holy Savior,
To the table of Your grace;
Let no doubt or sin delay me,
I will seek Your holy face.
Though unworthy, still You call me,
With Your mercy ever true—
Draw me near, and I will follow,
To commune, O Lord, with You.

Chapter 11. That the Body and Blood of Christ and the Holy Scriptures Are Most Necessary to a Faithful Soul

The Voice of the Disciple

1. Lord Jesus, how great is the blessing for the devout soul who feeds on You in the sacred feast—where nothing is offered but You alone, the One most desired above all else. My heart longs to weep before You with the tears of love, to pour them out like Mary Magdalene and bathe Your feet with devotion. But where is that depth of love? Where are those tears? In Your presence—and in the company of angels—my heart should be set on fire and overflow with joy, for You are truly present in the Sacrament, though veiled beneath another form.

2. I could not bear to look at You if You revealed Your full glory. The world itself could not withstand the brightness of Your majesty. So, in mercy to my weakness, You hide Yourself in the Sacrament. Still, I possess and worship the same Lord the angels adore in heaven—though they see You clearly, and I must be content to walk by faith. I will cling to that light of faith until the day of eternal glory dawns and shadows flee away. When what is perfect comes, the Sacraments will cease, for the saints in glory need no sacramental help. They behold You face to face, transformed from glory to glory in Your eternal presence.

3. When I consider these mysteries, even spiritual comfort feels like a burden—because all else seems empty until I see You in Your full glory. You know, Lord, that nothing satisfies me but You. No created thing can give rest to my heart. Only You—whom I hope to see forever—can bring peace. Yet as long as I remain in this body, I must patiently submit to Your timing. Even the saints waited in faith and longing for Your glory. I believe what they believed. I hope as they hoped. And by Your grace, I long to share their joy. Meanwhile, I will walk by faith, strengthened by the example of the saints. I will take comfort in the Holy Scriptures, and above all, I will find refuge in Your Body and Blood.

4. I feel two significant needs in this life—without which life would be unbearable: I need spiritual food and I need spiritual light. You have given me both. Your Body and Blood refresh me, and Your Word is a lamp to my feet. Without these, I cannot truly live. The Scriptures and the Sacrament are like two sacred tables in the Church's treasury: the altar table, where I receive Your holy Body and Blood, and the table of the Word, where I learn the truth and am led into the Holy of Holies.

5. I thank You, Jesus, Light eternal, for the table of Scripture that You have prepared for us through the prophets, apostles, and teachers. And I thank You, Redeemer of the world, for preparing not a symbolic lamb, but Your very Body and Blood, to make known Your love. You gladden the hearts of the faithful with this holy meal and give them the cup of salvation, full of heavenly joy—where even the angels feast alongside us.

6. What a high and holy calling is the priesthood! To speak the consecrating words, to bless with sacred lips, to hold in their hands the Body of Christ, and to distribute it to others! How pure must be the hands, the lips, the heart of the priest! Nothing unholy should proceed from his mouth, for it often receives the Body of the Lord.

7. His eyes must be pure, for they gaze upon the Holy One. His hands should be lifted toward heaven, for they handle the Creator of heaven and earth. The Law says to priests: "Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy."

8. Lord God Almighty, give us grace. We who have taken on the priestly office need Your help to live worthily and walk with a clean conscience. If we fall short of such purity, grant us the grace to weep over our sins and serve You with deeper devotion in the coming days.

(1) Canticle 2:17
(2) 2 Corinthians 3:18
(3) Psalm 119:105
(4) Leviticus 19:2

Additional Bible References

- **Hebrews 4:16** – "Let's approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace for help at the time of our need."

- **John 6:35** – "Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; the one who comes to Me will not be hungry, and the one who believes in Me will never be thirsty.'"

- **1 Corinthians 10:16** – "Is the cup of blessing which we bless not a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is the bread which we break not a sharing in the body of Christ?"

- **Psalm 19:7** – "The Law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple."

- **Revelation 21:23** – "And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illuminated it, and its lamp is the Lamb."

A Table for the Soul

[Verse 1]
At Your table, Lord, I'm kneeling,
Hungering for grace again.
Bread of Heaven, gently healing
All my wounds and ev'ry sin.
Faith beholds You, veiled in glory,
Present in the bread and wine—
Here I taste redemption's story,
Drink the cup of love divine.

[Chorus]
Word and Sacrament together,
Food and light to guide my way—
Till I reach the dawn eternal,
And all shadows flee away.
Jesus, feast my soul forever,
Let me never turn aside—
You are all my heart has hungered,
You alone can satisfy.

[Verse 2]
Though the angels see You clearly,
I must walk this path by faith,
Clinging to Your promise dearly,
Held by mercy, not by strength.
Let me feed with deep devotion,
Let me live upon Your Word—
Let my heart with sweet emotion
Burn with love for Christ my Lord.

[Bridge]
Priest and Shepherd, Bread and Giver,
Sanctify these lips of clay—
Holy One, remain forever,
In this soul in which You stay.

[Chorus]
Word and Sacrament together,
Food and light to guide my way—
Till I reach the dawn eternal,
And all shadows flee away.
Jesus, feast my soul forever,
Let me never turn aside—
You are all my heart has hungered,
You alone can satisfy.

Chapter 12. That He Who Is About to Communicate with Christ Ought to Prepare Himself with Great Diligence

The Voice of the Beloved

1. I am the One who loves purity and gives holiness. I seek a clean heart, and that is where I make My home. Prepare the large upper room, fully furnished, and I will celebrate the Passover in your house with My disciples. (1) If you want Me to come and remain with you, then purge out the old leaven(2) and cleanse the home of your heart. Shut out the noise of the world and every sinful distraction. Be like the sparrow alone on the rooftop(3), and let the sorrow of your sin sink deep into your soul. For anyone who truly loves, prepares the best and most beautiful place for the one they love. That's how love shows itself—by eager and thoughtful hospitality.

2. Yet understand this: you cannot make yourself worthy, no matter how much you prepare—not even if you spent a whole year focused only on that task. You can draw near only because of My mercy and grace, not your merits. You are like a beggar invited to a rich man's table, with no gift to bring but your humility and gratitude. So do what you can—and do it well—not because of habit or pressure, but with reverence, love, and holy fear. Receive the Body of your Lord and God with awe, for I am the One who has called you. I commanded it, and I will provide what you lack. Come, and receive Me.

3. If I give you the gift of devotion, give thanks—it is not because of your worthiness, but because I had compassion. And if you feel dry, without any devotion, don't give up. Pray harder. Groan in longing. Keep knocking at the door. Don't stop until you receive just a crumb or drop of saving grace. You need Me—I do not need you. You do not come to make Me holy, but I come to sanctify you. You come so that I may make you better, join you to Myself, grant new grace, and stir you to a better life. Do not take this lightly. Prepare your heart carefully and welcome your Beloved with great diligence.

4. But preparation is not enough—you must also guard your heart after receiving Communion. Watchfulness after the Sacrament is just as necessary as devotion before it. In fact, good watchfulness afterward prepares you even better for the next time. People lose much grace when they quickly return to worldly distractions after Communion. Resist the urge to talk too much. Go to a quiet place and commune with your God. You now have Someone within you whom the whole world cannot take away. I am the One to whom you must wholly surrender. You are no longer to live for yourself, but for Me, free from all worry.

(1) Mark 14:14–15.
(2) 1 Corinthians 5:7.
(3) Psalm 102:7.

Additional Bible References

- **John 14:23** – "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him."
- **James 4:8** – "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."
- **Hebrews 10:22** – "Let's approach God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience."
- **Isaiah 57:15** – "I dwell on a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit."
- **Philippians 2:13** – "For it is God who is at work in you, both to desire and to work for His good pleasure."

Come and Receive Me

[Verse 1]
I stand at the door, My voice is calling—
Prepare a place, make room for grace.
Clear out the noise, the shadows falling,
And light a fire in that sacred space.
A clean heart is My resting place,
A soul made ready by mercy and faith.

[Chorus]
Come and receive Me, draw near and believe Me—
Not by your merit, but love's holy plea.
Come, though you're weary, uncertain, or broken,
For I am your portion, come dine with Me.

[Verse 2]
Though all your works can't make you worthy,
Still I invite you to My feast.
A beggar clothed in robes of mercy,
You'll find your hunger fully ceased.
Come empty, and I'll fill you still—
With grace that overflows My will.

[Bridge]
Don't turn again to worldly pleasure,
Don't let distractions steal the flame.
You hold within you Heaven's treasure,
So live no longer for your name.

[Chorus]
Come and receive Me, draw near and believe Me—
Not by your merit, but love's holy plea.
Come, though you're weary, uncertain, or broken,
For I am your portion, come dine with Me.

Chapter 13. That the Devout Soul Ought with the Whole Heart to Yearn After Union with Christ in the Sacrament

The Voice of the Disciple

1. Lord, if only I could find You alone, open my whole heart to You, and enjoy Your presence to the full measure of my longing! Let no one else intrude, no creature distract me, but let it be You and me alone—You speaking to me, and I to You—as lovers speak in intimate friendship, as dear friends dine in sweet fellowship. This is what I pray for, this is what I deeply desire: to be fully united with You, and to pull my heart away from every created thing. Through Holy Communion and frequent celebration, let me grow in the taste for heavenly and eternal things. O Lord my God, when will I be wholly united to You—lost in You entirely and forgetting myself? May it be true: You in me, and I in You;(1) and may we remain so, together, always.

2. Truly, You are my Beloved—more excellent than ten thousand, (2) the One my soul delights to dwell with all the days of her life. You are my Peace, where I find complete rest and perfect comfort. Apart from You there is only toil, sorrow, and endless misery. You are a hidden God, whose plans are not shared with the proud, but whose Word is given to the humble and simple. O how sweet is Your Spirit, Lord! You show Your gentleness to Your children by refreshing them with the Bread of Heaven—sweet beyond words and full of grace. No other people in all the world have their God so near to them as You are to Your faithful ones,(3) to whom You give Yourself daily as food and joy, lifting their hearts toward heaven.

3. What nation is as blessed as the Christian people? What creature under heaven is as deeply loved as the devout soul into whom God Himself enters to feed it with His glorious flesh? O unspeakable grace! O astonishing humility! O love beyond measure, given so freely to mankind! And what can I give to the Lord in return for such a gift? What offering can I bring in response to such immense love? The best I can give—the only worthy thing—is my whole heart, given completely to God and joined intimately to Him. Then my entire being will rejoice when my soul is fully united with God. Then He will tell me, "If you want to be with Me, I will be with you." And I will reply, "Stay with me, Lord! I long to be with You always—this is my whole desire: that my heart may be forever united to Yours."

(1) John 15:4.
(2) Song of Solomon 5:10.
(3) Deuteronomy 4:7.

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 73:25** – "Whom do I have in heaven but You? And with You, I desire nothing on earth."

- **1 Corinthians 6:17** – "But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him."
- **John 17:21** – "That they may all be one; just as You, Father, are in Me and I in You."
- **Ephesians 3:17–19** – "So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith… and that you may be filled to all the fullness of God."
- **Revelation 3:20** – "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me."

If Only You Were Near

[Verse 1]
If only I could find You near,
Away from every sound and face,
To pour my heart out without fear,
And rest within Your warm embrace.
Like lovers share a sacred word,
Or friends rejoice at table heard.

[Chorus]
If only You were near to me,
And I in You could always be,
No longer drawn to earth's despair,
But one with You in whispered prayer.
Come be my peace, my soul's delight—
Remain with me both day and night.

[Verse 2]
You are my joy, my chosen one,
More fair than any under sun.
Apart from You all life is pain,
But in Your love I live again.
O Bread of Heaven, sweet and true,
My soul finds rest in only You.

[Bridge]
What love is this, beyond all worth,
That God would feed the child of earth?
What can I give, what can I say,
But yield my heart and walk Your way?

[Chorus]
If only You were near to me,
And I in You could always be,
No longer drawn to earth's despair,
But one with You in whispered prayer.
Come be my peace, my soul's delight—
Remain with me both day and night.

Chapter 14. Of the Fervent Desire of Certain Devout Persons to Receive the Body and Blood of Christ

The Voice of the Disciple

1. O Lord, how great is the abundance of Your goodness, which You have prepared for those who fear You! I often feel ashamed when I think about certain devout people who come to Your Table with deep reverence and heartfelt affection. I blush at how casually and coldly I approach Your altar—how dry, how unfeeling I remain—how little I am stirred with love before You, my God. I am not drawn with such intensity or affection as many others have been, who, out of burning desire and tender devotion, could not hold back their tears. They seemed to thirst for You with both body and soul, O God, O Fountain of Life, and found no peace or satisfaction until they received Your Body with joyful eagerness and holy longing.

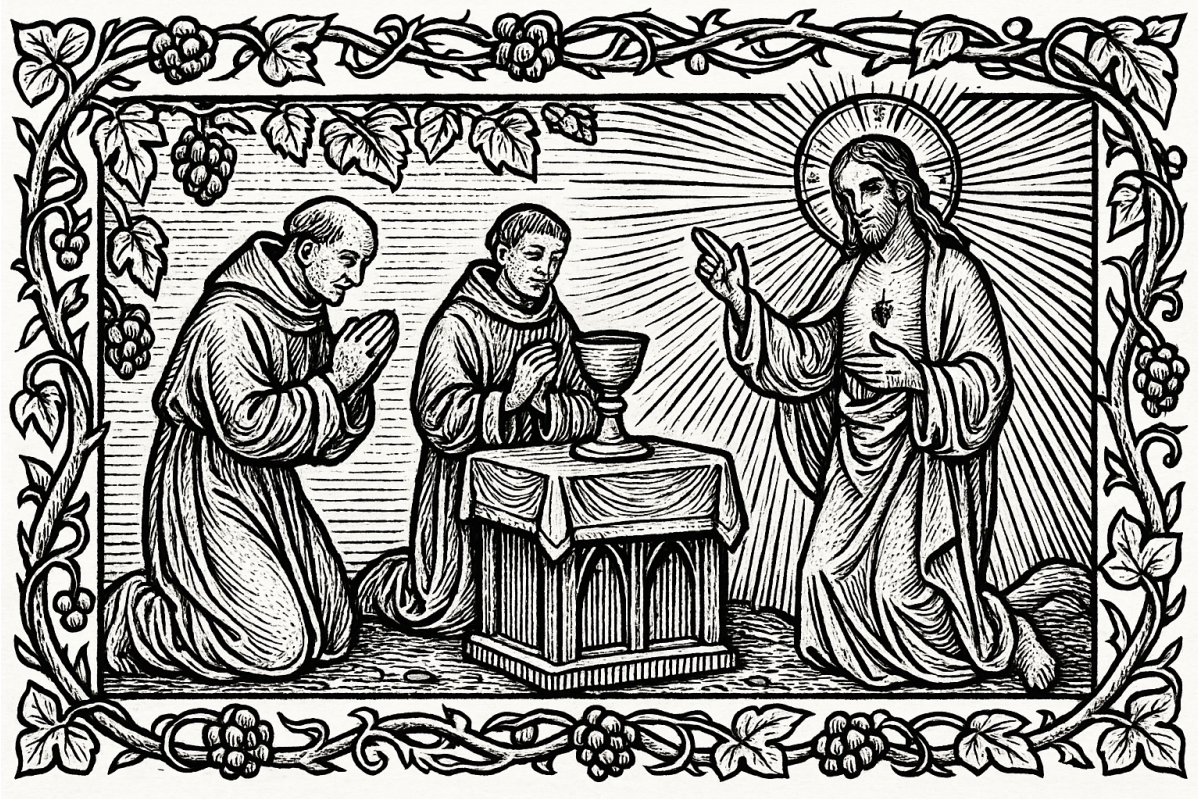
2. What passionate faith these people had! It became a clear sign of Your Real Presence. For they recognized their Lord in the breaking of the bread—their hearts burned within them (1) as Jesus walked with them. Oh, how far I am from such love, such fire of devotion! Be merciful to me, O Jesus—kind and gracious Lord. Grant Your poor servant just a taste of that heartfelt love during Holy Communion. Even a small spark would strengthen my faith, deepen my hope in Your goodness, and ignite a love that will never fade—a love nourished by the heavenly manna.

3. But I know Your mercy can give me this grace. You can fill me with the fire of devotion on the day of Your choosing. Even though I don't yet burn with such fervor as those most devoted to You, still, by Your grace, I desire to have that burning desire. I pray to be included with those who love You so profoundly, and to be counted among the number of Your holy ones.

(1) Luke 24:32

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 42:1–2** – "As the deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants for You, God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God."
- **Matthew 5:6** – "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied."
- **Isaiah 55:1** – "You who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost."
- **John 6:35** – "Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; the one who comes to Me will not be hungry, and the one who believes in Me will never be thirsty.'"
- **Philippians 3:10** – "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings."



Come, Burning Heart

[Verse 1]
O Jesus, how I long for You,
But cold my heart remains.
I see the ones whose love is true—
Their eyes are wet with holy flames.
They run to You, they weep and yearn,
And all their deepest passions burn.

[Chorus]
Come, burning heart, ignite in me
A love that longs relentlessly.
Though weak I am, I still aspire
To feel that holy, cleansing fire.
Just one small spark of heaven's flame
Would set my soul to praise Your name.

[Verse 2]
They know You in the broken bread,
Their hearts awake, alive, and fed.
But I, O Lord, still fail to see
The wonder of Your gift to me.
Yet I believe, and I believe—
O Spirit, help me not to grieve!

[Bridge]
I may not burn as they have burned,
But deep within my soul has turned
A hunger for that blazing grace—
To see You more, to seek Your face.

[Chorus]
Come, burning heart, ignite in me
A love that longs relentlessly.
Though weak I am, I still aspire
To feel that holy, cleansing fire.
Just one small spark of heaven's flame
Would set my soul to praise Your name.

Chapter 15. That the Grace of Devotion Is Acquired by Humility and Self-Denial

The Voice of the Beloved

1. You should earnestly seek the grace of devotion—pray for it fervently, wait for it patiently and faithfully, receive it gratefully, preserve it humbly, and respond to it diligently. Leave to God the time and method of His visitation. When it comes, receive it with joy. When it tarries, do not despair. Especially in seasons when you feel dry or devoid of devotion, humble yourself. Don't let discouragement weigh you down too heavily. Often God gives in a single moment what He had long withheld. Sometimes He gives at the end of your prayer what He had delayed giving at the beginning.

2. If grace were always available instantly and on demand, we frail humans would misuse it. Therefore, the grace of devotion must be awaited with hope and humble patience. Yet when it seems withheld, take responsibility—look first at your own sins or inward distractions. Often, a small barrier—a hidden attachment, a careless word, an unchecked desire—can block the flow of grace. And though it may seem small, anything that blocks such a great gift is no small thing. If you remove that hindrance completely, whether small or significant, and surrender wholly, you will receive what you ask for.

3. As soon as you surrender your whole heart to God—seeking nothing for yourself, desiring neither this thing nor that, but resting entirely in His will—you will find yourself united with Him and at peace. Nothing else will taste as sweet or bring such joy as doing the will of God. Whoever lifts up their will to God with a single heart and lets go of all selfish loves or dislikes will be most ready to receive grace. For God fills the empty vessels (1). The more you let go of useless things and die to yourself, the more freely grace will come, the more fully it will dwell in you, and the more it will lift your soul toward heaven.

4. Then you will see and rejoice; your soul will expand with wonder (2), because the hand of the Lord is with you. You have surrendered yourself fully to Him, and He receives what is His. This is the person who will be blessed—the one who seeks God with a whole heart and does not cling to self. Such a person, when receiving Holy Communion, enters into a deeper union with God—not because of feelings or personal devotion, but because they are seeking God's glory above all else.

(1) 2 Kings 4
(2) Isaiah 60:5

Additional Bible References

- **James 4:6** – "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

- **Matthew 5:8** – "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."
- **Psalm 37:4** – "Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart."
- **Galatians 2:20** – "It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me."
- **John 12:24** – "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

Empty and Open

[Verse 1]
I sought You in the silence, Lord,
But felt no fire or flame.
No echo stirred within my soul—
I only called Your name.
Yet in the quiet, deep and bare,
You waited with a gift to share.

[Chorus]
Empty and open, I come to You,
Longing for grace that makes all things new.
Not in my strength, but in surrender,
I meet You, Lord—so kind, so tender.

[Verse 2]
You fill the heart that makes You room,
You lift the soul that bends.
Not by my merit or my worth,
But by the love You send.
No riches here, no claims I bring—
Just trust in You, my everything.

[Bridge]
I lay aside my scattered dreams,
My selfish wants, my hidden schemes.
Now all I ask is to be still,
And live at rest within Your will.

[Chorus]
Empty and open, I come to You,
Longing for grace that makes all things new.
Not in my strength, but in surrender,
I meet You, Lord—so kind, so tender.

[Outro]
Here is my heart, undivided and true—
Empty and open, it waits for You.

Chapter 16. That We Ought to Lay Open Our Needs to Christ and Ask for His Grace

The Voice of the Disciple

1. O most sweet and loving Lord, whom I now long to receive with devotion, You know my weakness and the many needs I bear. You see the sin and struggle I endure—how often I am burdened, tempted, disturbed, and stained. I come to You for healing. I ask You for comfort and strength. I speak to You, the One who knows all things, to whom every secret of my heart is already laid bare, and who alone is able to fully comfort and help me. You know what good I need most and how poor I am in virtue.

2. See—I come before You poor and naked, pleading for grace and begging for mercy. Feed me, Lord, for I am hungry; set my cold heart ablaze with the fire of Your love; brighten my darkness with the light of Your presence. Turn all earthly pleasures into bitterness for me, all trials into patience, all worldly distractions into forgetfulness and disdain. Lift my heart to Heaven and do not let me wander restlessly over the earth. From this day forward, let You alone be sweet to me—for You alone are my food and drink, my love and joy, my sweetness and my entire good.

3. Oh, that You would completely kindle me, consume me, and transform me by Your presence—that I might become one spirit with You through the grace of inner union and the melting fire of sincere love! Do not let me leave Your presence hungry or dry, but deal with me in mercy, just as You have so often done wonders for Your saints. Should it surprise anyone if I were entirely consumed by You and emptied of myself? For You are the fire that always burns and never dies, the love that purifies the heart and enlightens the soul.

Additional Bible References

- **Hebrews 4:16** – “Therefore let’s approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace for help at the time of our need.”
- **Psalm 42:2** – “My soul thirsts for God, for the living God...”
- **Isaiah 55:1** – “Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money come, buy and eat.”
- **Jeremiah 31:25** – “For I give plenty of water to the weary ones, and refresh everyone who languishes.”
- **Romans 12:11** – “Not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.”

Come and Kindle Me

[Verse 1]
I come before You, worn and frail,
My soul in silence cries.
You know the battles that I face,
The doubts I can't disguise.
So here I kneel in trembling need,
For grace that flows and love that leads.

[Chorus]
Come and kindle me, Lord of flame,
Burn away pride, melt guilt and shame.
Fill this heart so cold and dry—
Be my all, my reason why.

[Verse 2]
Turn all the world to ash and dust,
Let every charm grow dim.
For only You can satisfy,
And draw me back again.
Lift up my heart to things above,
Where I am held by perfect love.

[Bridge]
You are the fire that never sleeps,
The love that purifies and keeps.
Let me not leave this holy place
Without the touch of saving grace.

[Chorus]
Come and kindle me, Lord of flame,
Burn away pride, melt guilt and shame.
Fill this heart so cold and dry—
Be my all, my reason why.

[Outro]
You are my joy, my food, my song—
To You alone I now belong.

Chapter 17. Of Fervent Love and Intense Desire for Receiving Christ

The Voice of the Disciple

1. With the deepest devotion and burning love, with my whole heart and every longing within me, I yearn to receive You, Lord—just as many saints and devout souls have desired You in Holy Communion, those who were wholly pleasing to You by the purity of their lives and their fiery devotion. O my God, Eternal Love, my only Good and measureless Joy, I long to receive You with the greatest reverence and desire any saint ever had—or could have.

2. And even though I fall far short of such devotion, I offer You the complete affection of my heart, as though I alone contained all those fervent and grateful desires. Yes, whatever a holy mind can imagine or long for, I offer it all to You with reverent awe and inward fire. I want to keep nothing back, but freely and fully give myself and all I have to You as a living sacrifice. O Lord my God, my Creator and Redeemer—receive me with the same devotion, reverence, praise, and gratitude, with the same faith, hope, and love, as Your most blessed mother, the glorious Virgin Mary, received You when she humbly answered the angel who brought her the glad news of Your incarnation: "Behold the servant of the Lord; may it happen to me according to your word."(1)

3. And just as Your forerunner, the greatest of all prophets, John the Baptist, was filled with joy even while in his mother's womb, leaping at Your presence in the Holy Spirit—and later, when he saw You among men, humbled himself and said, "The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and listens to him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice"(2)—so too I want to be filled with holy longing and present myself to You with my whole heart. And for myself, and for all who have asked for my prayers, I offer You the joy of every devout heart, their burning affections, their spiritual raptures, their divine visions, and all virtues and praises that have been or ever will be offered in heaven and on earth—so that You may be glorified worthily and praised forever.

4. Receive my prayers, Lord, and my longing to give You unending praise and unlimited blessing—praise that is rightfully Yours according to the greatness of Your glory. I offer this to You today and every day, every moment I live. And I ask every heavenly spirit and all Your faithful people to join me in thanking and praising You.

5. Let every nation and people and language bless You and magnify Your holy, sweet Name with joyful songs and fervent devotion. And may all who reverently and faithfully celebrate this great Sacrament and receive it in true faith be found worthy to receive Your grace and mercy. May they, through their deep communion with You and their comfort and joy at Your heavenly table, remember me in prayer—for I am poor and in great need.

(1) Luke 1:38
(2) John 3:29

Additional Bible References

- **Psalm 84:2** – "My soul longed and even yearned for the courtyards of the Lord..."
- **Matthew 5:6** – "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied."
- **Romans 12:1** – "...present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."
- **Philippians 1:21** – "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."
- **Psalm 63:1** – "God, You are my God; I shall be watching for You; my soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You…"

Let Every Heart Be Filled

[Verse 1]
With burning love, I seek You now,
O Christ, my joy, my King.
With all the saints who've gone before,
I lift my voice and sing.
I hunger for Your living bread,
To where Your mercy's table's spread.

[Chorus]
Let every heart be filled with fire,
With holy awe and deep desire.
Come dwell in me, O Lamb once slain,
My only joy, my highest gain.

[Verse 2]
As Mary bowed and gave consent,
So I surrender too.
Be born in me through bread and wine,
My heart belongs to You.
Let nothing else compete or stay,
Lord, take my pride and self away.

[Bridge]
The angels join in endless praise,
The saints adore Your holy ways.
I lift my soul with them in song—
To You alone I now belong.

[Chorus]
Let every heart be filled with fire,
With holy awe and deep desire.
Come dwell in me, O Lamb once slain,
My only joy, my highest gain.

[Outro]
And when I've eaten at Your feast,
Remember me, the last and least.

Chapter 18. That a Person Should Not Be a Curious Searcher of the Sacrament, but a Humble Imitator of Christ, Submitting Their Mind to Holy Faith

The Voice of the Beloved

1. Be careful not to become overly curious or speculative about this most profound Sacrament, if you want to avoid falling into doubt and confusion. Anyone who presumptuously probes into God's Majesty will be overwhelmed by His glory. (1) God can accomplish far more than the human mind can grasp. A humble and sincere search for truth is good—so long as it remains teachable and follows the sound teachings of the Church Fathers.

2. Blessed is the person who avoids difficult speculations and instead walks simply and steadily, obeying God's commandments. Many people have lost their spiritual fervor by digging too deeply into mysteries. What God requires of you is faith and a sincere life—not brilliant intellect or deep theological insight. How will you comprehend heavenly things if you can't even understand earthly things? So submit yourself to God and surrender your understanding to faith; then God will give you the light of knowledge—just enough to help you grow as He sees fit.

3. Some are sorely tempted with doubts about the faith or the Sacrament itself. This is not always their fault, but it is often an enemy attack. Do not be alarmed when this happens. Do not argue with the thoughts in your mind, nor try to answer every doubt the devil throws at you. Instead, trust in the Word of God. Believe His saints and prophets, and the evil one will flee. Sometimes it's even good for a believer to endure such trials. The devil does not waste time tempting those who are already far from God; he targets the faithful and devout, seeking to shake their confidence in many ways.

4. So move forward with simple, unwavering faith. Come to the Sacrament with reverence and humility. Whatever you cannot understand, leave it peacefully in the hands of Almighty God. God will not mislead you. The person who puts too much trust in themselves is the most easily misled. God walks with the simple, reveals Himself to the humble, gives understanding to the childlike, opens the hearts of the pure, and hides His grace from the proud and inquisitive. Human reason is limited and can fail—but true faith never misleads.

5. Reason and human investigation should follow faith, not lead it or try to dismantle it. Faith and love take the highest place in this holy and surpassingly great Sacrament. They work in ways that are hidden from view. The eternal and infinite God does marvelous things in heaven and on earth—things that human minds cannot explain. And if our reason could fully understand God's works, they would no longer be considered wonderful or beyond words.

(1) Proverbs 25:27 (Vulgate)

Additional Bible References

- **Isaiah 55:8–9** – "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways... For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways..."
- **Hebrews 11:1** – "Now faith is the certainty of things hoped for, a proof of things not seen."
- **1 Corinthians 2:14** – "But a natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him..."
- **Matthew 18:3–4** – "Unless you change and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven... whoever humbles himself..."
- **Romans 11:33** – "Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!"

Faith Walks Where Eyes Cannot See

[Verse 1]
I do not seek to understand
The mystery beyond the veil.
My reason fails, my thoughts are weak—
Yet still, Your truths prevail.
You ask not wisdom from my lips,
But trust that never slips.

[Chorus]
Faith walks where eyes cannot see,
Through shadows deep and wide.
I hold Your Word, I bend my knee,
With Jesus as my guide.
No logic can unwrap Your grace—
I rest in Your embrace.

[Verse 2]
The wise may stumble in their pride,
The proud fall in their quest.
But You reveal Yourself, O Lord,
To humble hearts at rest.
The simple soul, the childlike prayer—
You meet them even there.

[Bridge]
No need to chase the stars above,
When Love has come so near.
In bread and wine, You make Your home—
Your presence drawing near.
So I believe, though I don't see—
My Savior comes to me.

[Chorus]
Faith walks where eyes cannot see,
Through shadows deep and wide.
I hold Your Word, I bend my knee,
With Jesus as my guide.
No logic can unwrap Your grace—
I rest in Your embrace.